VISIT…

Top 10 cookies and crafts for the whole family!

Yum For Kids

FOOD & FUN

Winter Wonderful: 19 Stunning Sweets Made Simple

Season's Eatings: 15 healthy snacks & meals

Family Feasts: 6 recipes for young chefs

PLUS: 5 parties to celebrate the holidays!

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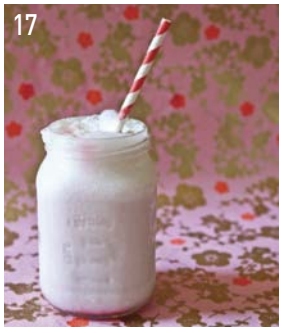

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Celebrating the Season

It has finally arrived: our favorite time of the year! 'Tis the season for cookies and pies, for beautiful bows and homemade gifts for loved ones. 'Tis the season for awe and reverence, for licking the bowl and sneaking a little taste, for fabulous holiday spreads and cozy cups of hot chocolate. 'Tis the season for holiday traditions, both old and new, big and small. But most of all—and this really is the best part—'tis the season for giving thanks.

This year, as *Yum Food & Fun for Kids'* fourth year comes to a close, we are thankful for you, our readers. Thank you for sharing your family traditions and your cookie recipes. Thank you for sending in pictures of your adorable children joining you in the kitchen festivities. And thank you for inviting us into your homes and allowing us to become a part of your celebrations. We here at *Yum* hope that we have helped bring joy to your holidays, and we thank you for bringing joy to ours.

Bridgett Hurley

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Fun-Sized

Equip your kitchen for a family cookie-making session.

WRITTEN BY **E.S. RO** STYLING BY **E.S. RO** AND **ELISE PORTALE** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ELISE PORTALE**

Delicious holiday cookies come in all shapes and sizes, but the best ones are the ones you make at home. From pretty, iced snowflakes to round ornaments blanketed in colorful sprinkles, the possibilities are endless. Let your kids join in on the fun of baking this year. It might get a little messy, but these kitchen tools are specially designed for your little ones so they can do more than help eat up this year's baked treats.

1. Get ready to roll out the cookie dough with this miniature rolling pin. It works just as well as the mom-sized version! Wooden rolling pin, $8.50; **forsmallhands.com.**

2. See how your children measure up with this colorful set of durable cups and spoons. Melamine baking set, $23.95; **forsmallhands.com.**

3. Grinding up cinnamon and nutmeg is fun and safe with this easy-to-use gadget. Mortar and pestle, $9.95; **forsmallhands.com.**

4. For a fancy finish, top your cookies with these edible golden treasures. Gold sugar pearls, $4.99; **wilton.com.**

5. These miniature candy canes taste just as pepperminty as their regular-sized counterparts. Candy Cane Cookie Sprinkles, $1.19; **shopbakersnook.com.**

6. These ready-made icing tubes allow your children to practice their writing and create their own unique designs. Icing tubes, $2.29 each; **wilton.com.**

7. Bake gingerbread men, snowmen and snowflakes with these classic cookie cutters. Then, use the flip side as a stencil to decorate them. Christmas Cookie Cutters 3-Piece Set, $5.99; **shopbakersnook.com.**

8. With a delicate and beautiful design, these pretty plates are perfect for serving up finished holiday cookies. Doily plate, $6 each; **pier1.com.**

Gobble it Up

Serve this healthy fruit and cheese platter for a seasonal snack.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DIANNA MUSCARI, KITCHENPREPBLOG.COM**

While your kids are usually thankful for snack time, it can often be a hassle for you. Between preparing something wholesome enough to feed them and making it cute and tasty enough for them to touch it, snack time can be rough. So take your kids' favorite healthy ingredients and present them in a fun, interactive package that's so easy to make, even you'll be thankful for it!

Thanksgiving Turkey-tizer Platter

Prep: 5 minutes
Makes 1 turkey platter

Assorted green leaves, such as Swiss chard
3-4 slices assorted meat, such as prosciutto
4 pieces assorted cheese, such as Muenster or cheddar, cut with a leaf-shaped cookie cutter
5 assorted crackers
1 pear, cut in half vertically
2 peppercorns
1 piece of baby carrot, preferably a pointy one
1 walnut, cut in half
1 pretzel stick, broken in half

1 Arrange the leaves on a platter in a fanned-out fashion to form the back of the turkey's plumage.

2 Place meats in desired pattern, and then do the same with the cheese slices. Then, add crackers and lay them out so you can still see the cheese and meats behind them.

3 Place a pear half in the center of the "plumage," saving the other half for a second Turkey-tizer Platter if desired. The widest part should be at the bottom of the plumage.

4 To make the turkey's face, press 2 peppercorns into the pear for eyes. Press a small pointy piece of carrot in place for the beak. Press the walnut half under the beak for the turkey's "gobbler" (technically called a wattle). Insert the pretzel stick halves into the bottom of the pear for the turkey's legs.

5 Serve with condiments such as honey mustard and jam to "dress" the crackers. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

A Sweet Sleigh Ride

Snow or not, with a little creativity and candy, your kids can enjoy a sleigh ride this winter.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ABEER RIZVI, CAKEWHIZ.COM**

Many holiday treats are adorable and fancy—which sometimes makes them absolutely inedible. While adults find these glued treats fun, kids just want to be able to eat them. So bring back the fun in holiday goodies with this adorable peppermint and Twix sled, which uses the tastiest glue around: chocolate!

Tip

As the only "glue" used is chocolate, these 100% tasty sleds make excellent edible gifts!

Christmas Candy Cane Sleds

Prep: 5 minutes
Makes 1 sled

1 Twix Mini candy bar
2 mini candy canes
1 mini teddy bear graham cracker
¼ cup chocolate, finely chopped and melted
Paintbrush

1. Unwrap a Twix Mini candy bar.
2. Dip your paintbrush in melted chocolate and brush the chocolate on the sides of the Twix bar.
3. When the chocolate is still wet, stick a mini candy cane, curved-side facing up, on each side of the Twix. Hold for a few seconds so that they stick securely.
4. Dip your paintbrush in melted chocolate again and brush a little chocolate on top of the Twix bar, toward the "back" of the sled (the opposite end of the curved end of the candy canes).
5. Stick the teddy graham cracker straight up in the chocolate. Hold the cracker for a few seconds so that it sticks securely.

Sweet and Simple

Treat your child to healthy versions of your own childhood favorites.

FROM *HONESTLY HEALTHY FOR LIFE* BY **NATASHA CORRETT AND VICKI EDGSON**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA LINDER

Childhood is a pure and simple time. And your child's treats should be the same. From label ingredients that you can't pronounce to those you know enough about to stay away from, the grocery store aisles can be a health minefield. It's time to hearken back to those simpler times and cook up some wholesome snacks that you can feel good about.

Tip
If you want to make these cookies more indulgent, add sugar-free vegan chocolate chips or some pumpkin and sunflower seeds.

Raisin Oat Cookies

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Bake: 10-15 minutes
Cool: 10 minutes
Makes 12-16

Generous 3 cups rice flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1½ cups oats
1 cup vegan butter
2½ cups coconut palm sugar
4 eggs, beaten
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1¾ cups raisins

1 Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2 In a bowl, mix the flour, baking soda, spices and oats and combine well.
3 In a separate large bowl, beat together the butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla extract. (Don't worry if the mixture looks like it's split. Once the dried ingredients are mixed in, it all comes together.)
4 Mix the dry ingredients into the wet mixture and add the raisins. Add extra raisins or oats if the mixture seems a little too wet, although the mixture is supposed to be quite sticky. Place tablespoons of the mixture 1 inch apart on the baking sheet and flatten slightly.
5 Bake for 10-15 minutes and then transfer to a wire rack to let cool.

Fruity Roll-Ups

Prep: 5 minutes
Dehydrate: 5-6 hours
Makes 20 strips

FOR ORANGE ROLL-UPS
5½ ounces mango
3½ ounces peach
¼ teaspoon orange-flower water

FOR RED ROLL-UPS
1 cup strawberries
1 teaspoon xylitol

1 **FOR ORANGE ROLL-UPS:** First, blend the mango, peach and orange-flower water into a smooth purée.
2 Spread out the purée on a dehydrator sheet and set the dehydrator for 5 hours at 104°F. (If you don't have a dehydrator, don't despair. Just cook them in the oven at its lowest temperature with the door open for 5-6 hours, or until "leather-like.")
3 **FOR RED ROLL-UPS:** Blend the strawberries and xylitol. Again, spread out on a dehydrator sheet and set the dehydrator for 5 hours at 104°F.
4 Remove from the dehydrator, cut into strips about 1 inch wide and roll them up. Store these roll-ups in an airtight container.

For more on *Honestly Healthy for Life*, see The Bookshelf, page 95.

All Aboard!

Sweeten up the holidays with this fun (and edible) craft.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MELISSA BAHEN, LULUTHEBAKER.COM**

The holidays are approaching, full-speed ahead! Make the best out of that candy abundance with this adorable and easy candy train. Using glue dots makes this craft kid friendly and keeping all candies fully wrapped saves your home from a sugary mess. Try mixing up the candies for a new look or adding on additional cars to make a fun mantel decoration!

Christmas Candy Train

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Makes 1 train

Large glue dots
1 roll of Lifesavers candy
1 pack of gum
4 Starlight Mints
1 individually wrapped ROLO candy
1 bell-shaped chocolate (Butterfinger and Crunch both come in bells)
Thin ribbon or twine (optional)

1 Using a glue dot, attach a Lifesavers roll to a pack of gum so that the long sides are parallel.
2 Glue the Starlight Mints to the pack of gum to make wheels.
3 Glue the Rolo upside-down to the top of one end of the roll of Lifesavers.
4 Glue the chocolate bell upside-down to the opposite end of the roll of Lifesavers.
5 Repeat steps 1 and 2 to make train cars to follow your newly made engine!

Tip

If you want to hang your Christmas candy trains on the tree (or attach them to presents), glue a small loop of ribbon onto the top of each candy train right between the Rolo and the bell.

It's a Wonderful Shelf Life

Celebrate the winter season with these creative store-bought creations.

WRITTEN BY **ELISE PORTALE**
RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *SMART COOKIE* BY **CHRISTI FARR JOHNSTONE**

One of the wonders of the holidays is the sweets. Every year, moms around the world up the ante with stacking, dipping and decorating their cookies. If you're not a master of fondant just yet, it can seem impossible to create something as fun as what you see online. But thanks to *Smart Cookie*, a new book by Christi Farr Johnstone, cute and simple cookie crafts are literally within your reach.

With *Smart Cookie*, Johnstone wanted to recreate that important tradition of family cookie baking but with a modernized approach to the packed life of a busy mom. "To me, the kitchen is a place to connect with the present, the past and the future, and a place to spend some quality time," she says. "When I was developing recipes for this book, I was constantly thinking, 'How can I make this easier? How can I save time?'" To give you a taste of the thrifty sweetness of *Smart Cookie*, here are our three favorite recipes for you to try this winter season.

A Slice of Pie

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Makes 12 cookies

12 Walkers shortbread triangle cookies
1 (16-ounce) can preferred frosting
1 (8.4-ounce) can Cloud White Betty Crocker Decorating Cupcake Icing
12 pieces garnish of your choice, such as pecans, chocolate chips, shredded coconut, chopped lemon candies, etc.

1 Spread the cookies with the frosting of your choice.
2 Pipe on white cupcake icing to replicate the look of whipped cream.
3 Garnish with candies, nuts or other toppings of your choice.

Tip

Coconut pecan frosting makes for sweet little pecan pies, lemon frosting creates the look of lemon meringue, you can't go wrong with chocolate and you can even use strawberry jam! Whatever your favorite frosting flavor is, it's guaranteed to work well on these cookies.

Light the Menorah

Prep: 10 minutes
Set: 4 hours
Makes 9 cookie candles

Wilton Dab-N-Hold edible adhesive
27 Murray Sugar Free shortbread cookies
6 ounces white candy coating
9 Pepperidge Farm Pirouette rolled wafer cookies
9 yellow Jordan almonds (or substitute yellow Peanut M&M's)
White candy writer
6 ounces blue candy coating
10 round sandwich cookies

1 Place 4-5 drops of Wilton Dab-N-Hold edible adhesive onto the top of a Murray Sugar Free shortbread cookie. Place a second cookie on top.

2 Place 4-5 drops of the edible adhesive on top of the second cookie and place a third cookie on top, creating a small tower of 3 cookies. Repeat with the remaining cookies, creating 8 towers of 3 cookies each. Allow to dry for at least 4 hours.

3 Prepare the white candy coating according to package directions. Working one cookie at a time, dip one end of a Pirouette into the white candy coating and immediately place a Jordan almond on top of the white candy coating while it's still wet.

4 Hold the Jordan almond in place until the candy coating starts to set. It's OK if the candy coating drips down the cookie; this will just make it look more like a real candle.

5 Prepare a white candy writer according to package directions and squeeze some additional white candy coating on to create the candle effect. Once the candy coating is set, lay the Pirouette cookies onto a baking sheet lined with wax or parchment paper.

6 Prepare the blue candy coating according to package directions. Working one cookie at a time, dip the sandwich cookie into the blue candy coating, and then place the cookie on a baking sheet lined with waxed or parchment paper. (You can do this easily with your hands, but feel free to use small tongs or clean tweezers for this step if that's easier. Just be super careful so the cookies don't break!)

7 Immediately place a shortbread cookie stack on top of the blue candy coating-covered sandwich cookie. Repeat with 7 more sandwich cookies. The final 2 sandwich cookies will be used together in the next step.

8 For the center candle of the menorah, dip a sandwich cookie into the blue candy coating and place it on wax paper. Then immediately dip the last cookie into the candy coating and place it on top of the first cookie. Top both cookies with the final shortbread cookie stack. Allow to dry for at least 1 hour.

9 If necessary, reheat the white candy coating according to package directions. Let the candy coating cool slightly, as a thickened, slightly cooled coating will work best. Dip the end of a Pirouette cookie into the candy coating, about 1 inch, and immediately place the Pirouette onto one of the shortbread cookie stacks. Hold in place until the candy coating sets and the cookie can stand on its own. Repeat with the remaining cookies. These cookies are fragile, so handle with care.

Tip

Because these pretty candle cookies are a bit fragile, make 1-2 extras to have on hand, just in case!

Sweet Snowmen

Prep: 10-15 minutes
Set: 2 hours
Makes 4 snowmen

12 large, soft round cookies
1 (16-ounce) can vanilla frosting
½ cup white crystal sugar
1 (7-ounce) pouch blue Betty Crocker Decorating Cookie Icing
¼ cup white Tic Tac Freshmints
28 black SweetWorks Pearls
4 orange candy-coated sunflower seeds
12 black SweetWorks Sixlets
8 small pretzel sticks

1 Using cookie cutters, cut 4 cookies into large circles, 4 cookies into medium circles and 4 cookies into small circles. The small circle cookies should be at least 1½ inches in diameter.

2 Ice all the cookies with the vanilla frosting, leaving the top ²/₃ of the 4 small cookies unfrosted in the area that will become the hats.

3 Sprinkle the frosted areas with crystal sugar.

4 Prepare Betty Crocker Decorating Cookie Icing according to package directions. Squeeze the cookie icing onto the unfrosted part of the 4 small cookies to create hats. Immediately place the Tic Tac mints along the base of the hat, and one at the top.

5 To create 4 snowman faces, take the cookies that have blue hats and place on each one 2 Pearls for eyes, 1 sunflower seed for the nose and 5 black Pearls for the mouth.

6 On each of the 4 medium-sized cookies, place 3 SweetWorks Sixlets down the center as buttons.

7 On plates, arrange the cookies in shapes of snowmen, placing the small pretzel sticks next to the medium-sized cookies to represent snowman arms. Note that the pretzel sticks and cookies are not stuck together, but rather arranged on the plate to look like snowmen. Allow to dry for at least 2 hours.

Photo by Alan Penn

Tip

For a fun flavor twist, stir a few drops of peppermint extract into your frosting and use chocolate cookies.

Smart Cookie **by Christi Farr Johnstone, published by Running Press, ©2014; $16.00, runningpress.com.**

Pretty in Peppermint

Take a sweet break with this peppermint milkshake.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JACQUELINE deMONTRAVEL**

Nothing better embodies the beauty of winter than the red and white of peppermint. From their strong, spicy flavor to their sweet creaminess, peppermints and candy canes are a treat on their own. Make them into a delightful milkshake and you've got an indulgent way to ring in the holiday season!

Tip

If peppermint ice cream is not available, substitute with vanilla and add 4-6 drops of peppermint extract.

Peppermint Shake

Prep: 5 minutes

Serves 2

1 scoop peppermint ice cream
1 cup low-fat milk
2 drops peppermint extract
Whipped cream

1 Place all ingredients in a blender. Blend until well mixed. Pour into a glass and top with whipped cream.

Tip

For an extra peppermint touch, use a candy cane as a stirrer or garnish with crushed peppermint candy.

Hot and Healthy

This simple, hearty meal is a hit with the kids.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JACQUELINE deMONTRAVEL**

As the days get cooler, it takes more of everything to keep your kids warm. Whether you have them running around outside or bundled up by the fireplace, give them the fuel and heat they need to have a healthy winter season. This hearty stew is full of winter vegetables and chicken for those essential nutrients and protein kids need to power through chilly days.

Healthy Winter Chicken Stew

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Cook: 40 minutes
Serves 4

½ tablespoon olive oil
2 diced shallots
1½ cup water
1 bouillon cube
Juice of ½ a lemon
1 sweet potato
2 medium carrots
2 celery stalks
1 red pepper
1 small zucchini
1 small yellow squash
1 small tomato
1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans
2 chicken breasts
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
Sprig of fresh tarragon

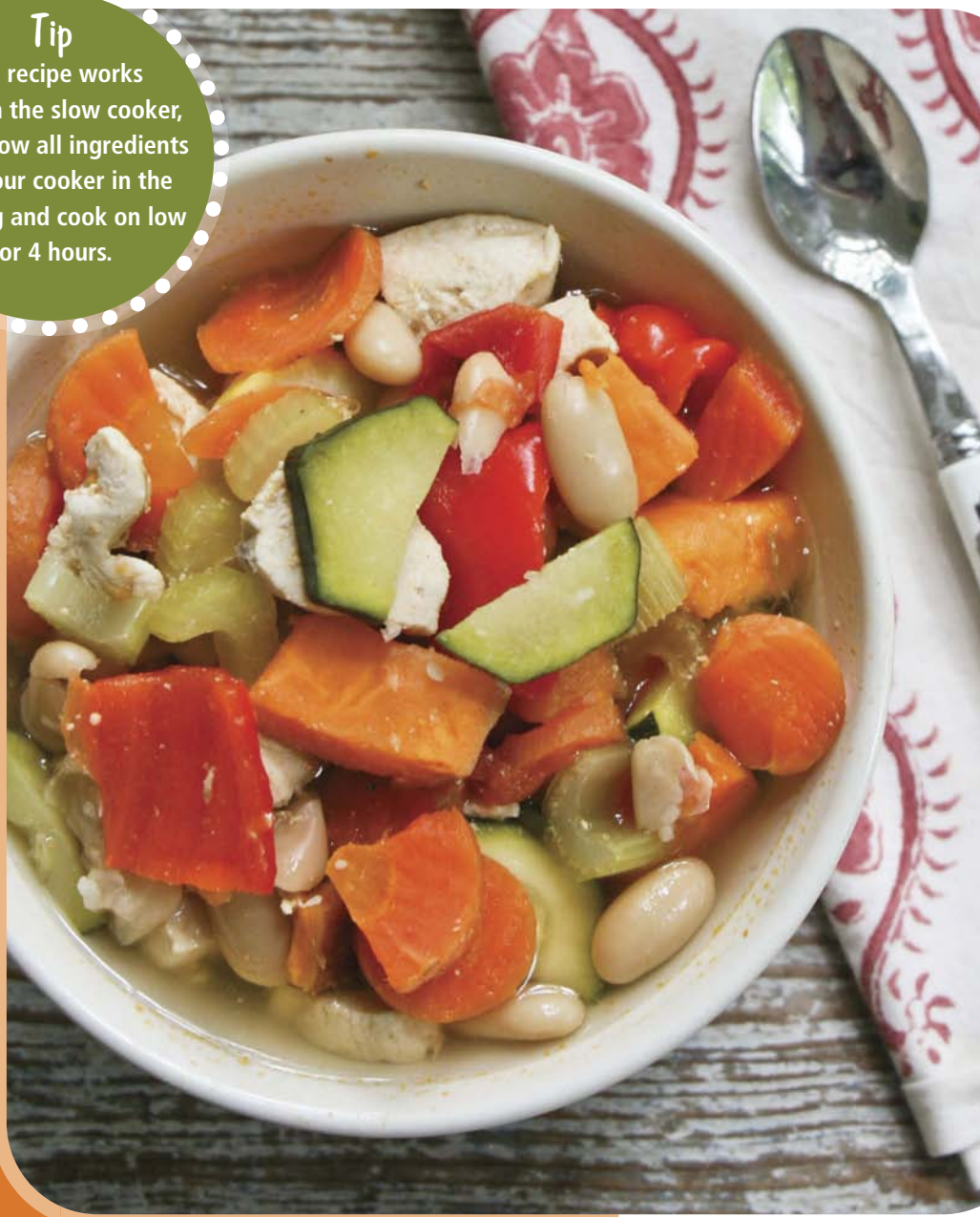
1 In a large pot, heat the oil. Once simmering, add the diced shallots and cook until slightly transparent. Add the water, bouillon cube and lemon juice.

2 Microwave the sweet potato for 2½ minutes. Chop, combine with the remaining chopped vegetables and add to the pot. Add the beans.

3 Cut the chicken into cubes and sprinkle with Italian seasoning. Add to the pot.

4 Simmer the stew on low for 40 minutes, until chicken is cooked through and vegetables are tender. Serve with fresh tarragon by itself or over rice.

Tip
This recipe works great in the slow cooker, too! Throw all ingredients into your cooker in the morning and cook on low for 4 hours.



On a Roll!

A tasty crescent roll with a special secret is a fun family activity for Thanksgiving day.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JESSIE JANE, LILISHOP.COM**

Between the giant turkeys and plentiful pies, it's easy to forget the true meaning of Thanksgiving. This year might be a good time to remind your kids about how to appreciate the good things that happen to them and their families. Celebrate being thankful for everything from good health to good grades with these fun and festive message-stuffed crescent rolls.

Thankful Rolls

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Bake: 8 minutes
Serves 8-12

Construction paper
2-3 ballpoint pens
1 package crescent dinner rolls

Tip

With nice clean hands, rolling up the crescent rolls is the perfect kitchen activity for your little ones!

1 Cut a piece of construction paper into 1x4-inch strips. Then, place a small pile of the paper strips where your guests will be gathering. As each Thanksgiving guest enters the house, have them scribble down what they are thankful for using a ballpoint pen

2 Preheat the oven to 350°F.

3 Once you have all the notes, fold them in half and place them in the center of each unbaked crescent roll. Roll each crescent as you normally would, ensuring no paper sticks out.

4 Cook the crescent rolls for 8 minutes or until slightly golden brown.

5 Put the warm crescents in a basket and serve them on the dinner table with the main meal. As each guest opens their roll, they'll see a random thankful message. Then, guests can try to guess who wrote their roll's note!

Breakfast

Festive Firsts

Keep mornings fun and nutritious with these 2 breakfast ideas.

When the holidays come around, it's slightly easier to get the kids out of bed. With thoughts of sugarplums dancing in their heads, they've got sweets on the brain from the moment you knock on their bedroom door. Finding a balance between happy and healthy can be tricky this time of year, so mix things up with these seasonal breakfast ideas, one splurge-worthy, the other guilt-free.

Pancake Poppers

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KATHI TROENDLE, DELICIOUSLYYUM.COM**

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Bake: 12 minutes
Cool: 5 minutes
Makes 24 poppers

1½ cups all-purpose flour
3½ teaspoons baking powder
¾ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 cup plus 1 tablespoon milk
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1 large egg white
½ cup mini chocolate chips, optional

1 Preheat the oven to 375°F. Spray a cake-pop or mini-muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.
2 In a bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. Add the milk, 1 whole egg, vanilla and melted butter. Whisk until mostly smooth, but don't over mix. It's OK if some lumps remain.
3 In another bowl, beat the remaining egg white until soft peaks form. Gently fold into the batter until incorporated. Add mini chocolate chips, if using.
4 Using a cookie scoop, fill each cake-pop mold or muffin cup with pancake batter (fill it almost all the way) and place in the oven. Bake for 12 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Immediately invert pancake poppers onto a wire rack and let cool for 5 minutes or until they're safe to handle. Serve with your favorite toppings.

Reindeer Bagel

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KELLIE STRICKLAND, LITTLENUMMIES.NET**

Prep: 5 minutes
Makes 1 bagel

2 tablespoons brown-sugar cinnamon cream cheese
1 bagel, plain or whole wheat, cut in half horizontally
1 tablespoon mixed berry cream cheese
2 mini chocolate chips or raisins

1 Spread brown-sugar cinnamon cream cheese on one of the bagel halves.
2 Cut antler pieces and an oval out of the other half of the bagel.
3 Spread mixed berry cream cheese on the oval piece and put in place for the nose. Then, press the antler pieces into place. Add mini chocolate chips for the eyes and serve.

Lunch

NAUGHTY AND NICE

This kid-favorite meal is a stealthy healthy lunch that tastes like a splurge.

As a child, cold winter days and mac 'n' cheese go together like another childhood favorite, peanut butter and jelly. Creamy and filled with melty, gooey cheese, those little elbow noodles are a comfort food to many, including your kids. But when you add a secret healthy ingredient to such a widely loved dish, you have the perfect recipe to turn a naughty splurge into a nice, balanced lunch.

Hidden Veggie Mac 'n' Cheese

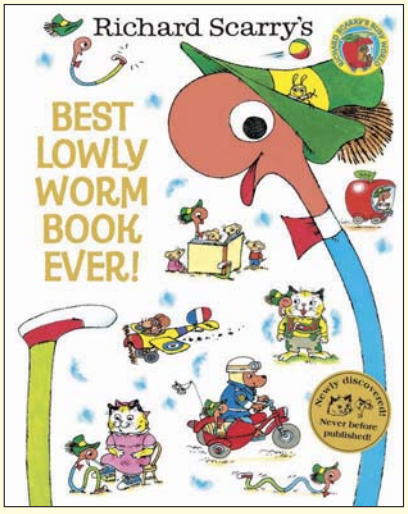
RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **AMY ROSKELLEY, SUPERHEALTHYKIDS.COM**

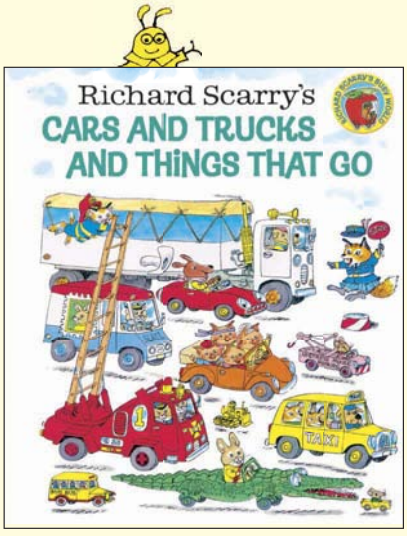
Prep: 2 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Serves 2-4

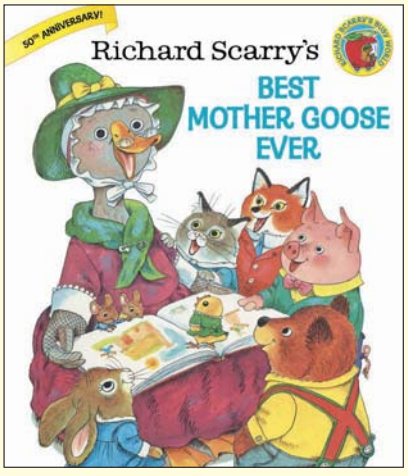
1½ cups elbow noodles
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon flour
½ cup milk
½ cup summer squash purée
1 tablespoon cream cheese
1 teaspoon salt
¼-½ cup shredded cheddar cheese (or preferred cheese)

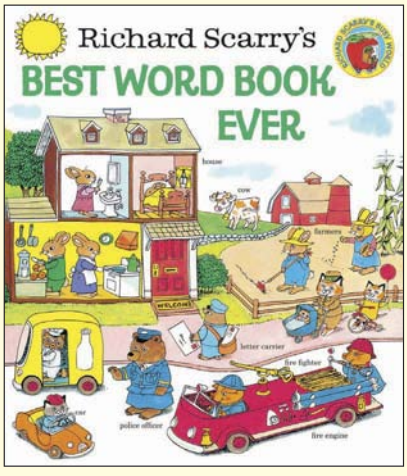
1 Cook elbow noodles according to package directions and drain.
2 In a large skillet, melt the butter. Add the flour and mix until thick and bubbly (but not burned).
3 Add the milk and stir till it begins to bubble again. Then, add the summer squash purée, stirring until fully smooth and mixed in. Add the cream cheese, mix until smooth and then add salt.
4 Add the cooked macaroni to your thickened cheese sauce. Top with shredded cheddar or your preferred cheese.

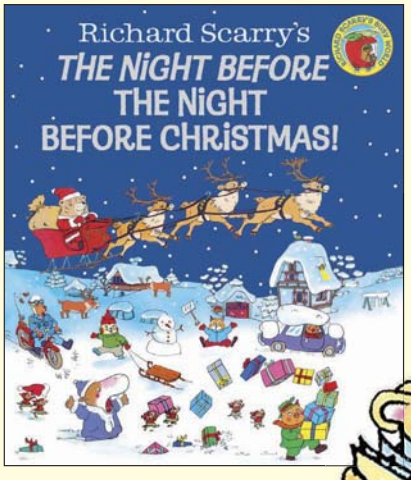
Get BUSY Reading with Richard Scarry!

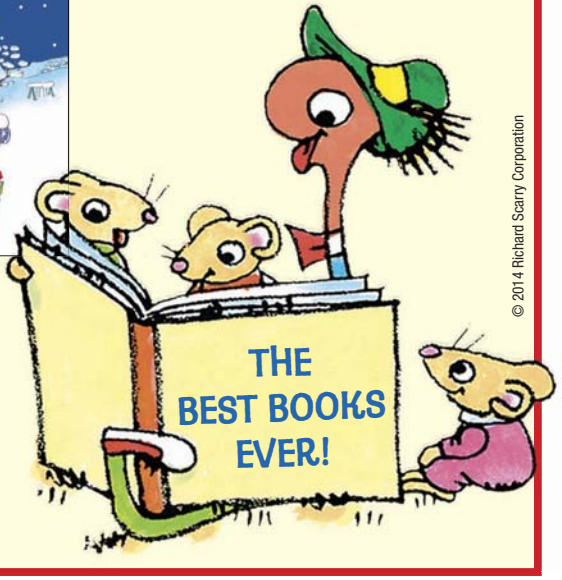












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Week of Dinners

Breakfast Lunch Dinner

Holiday Hustle

A week's worth of meals to help you keep calm and shop on this season.

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY **AIMEE ERROR,** THEELEPHANTOFSURPRISEBLOG.COM

MONDAY
Slow-Cooker Chicken Burritos

TUESDAY
Baked Ziti

WEDNESDAY
Broccoli, Ham and Cheese Twist

THURSDAY
Hearty, Home-Style Chili

FRIDAY
Chicken Pesto Pizza

DESSERT
Santa's Favorite Peppermint Oreos

Nothing says the holidays like gathering around the dinner table with family and friends. But rather than spending hours in the kitchen preparing these meals, you could be decorating cookies and writing letters to Santa with your kids instead! Simplify things this season by adding these quick and easy meals into your rotation.

Groceries

GRAINS
1 cup cooked rice
6-8 flour tortillas
15 ounces ziti or penne noodles
1 refrigerated container pre-made pizza dough

MEAT
3-4 chicken breasts (fresh or frozen)
1 cup chopped deli ham
1 pound ground beef

DAIRY
8 ounces ricotta cheese
1 egg
3 cups shredded cheddar cheese

PRODUCE
1 cup broccoli florets
1 green bell pepper
1 onion
1 cup spinach leaves
Garlic
Tomatoes, if desired
Lettuce, if desired
Avocado, if desired

CANNED GOODS
1 can black beans
1 jar salsa
1 jar store-bought pasta sauce
1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
2 (15.5-ounce) cans dark red kidney beans
1 jar Alfredo sauce
1 jar pesto
1 (8-ounce) can artichoke hearts

PANTRY
Italian seasoning
Salt
Pepper
Onion powder
Dried basil
Chili powder
Peppermints or candy canes
1 bag white chocolate chips
1 bag Oreo cookies

MONDAY

Burrito Night

Slow-Cooker Chicken Burritos

Prep: 5 minutes
Cook: 5 hours (slow cooker)
Serves 6

2-3 chicken breasts (fresh or frozen)
1 can black beans
1 cup jarred salsa
1 cup cooked rice
6-8 flour tortillas
Additional toppings, such as cheese, tomatoes, lettuce, avocado, etc.

TIP

Doubling the ingredients is easy to do, making this an ideal recipe for any gathering you're hosting this season!

Pasta Night

1 Place the chicken in your slow cooker.
2 Have your kids add black beans and the salsa of your choice on top of the chicken breasts.
3 Cook on low for about 5 hours, or until the chicken is cooked through and can be shredded easily with a fork.
4 Add the cooked rice to the shredded chicken mixture and stir.
5 Spoon the mixture onto flour tortillas and add any other toppings you like—cheese, tomatoes, lettuce, avocado, etc.

Baked Ziti

Prep: 5 minutes
Cook: 30 minutes
Rest: 5 minutes
Serves 6

15 ounces ziti or penne noodles
8 ounces ricotta cheese
1 egg
Italian seasoning, to taste
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 jar of store-bought pasta sauce
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

1 Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2 In a large saucepan, bring water and noodles to a boil. Cook until al dente and then drain.
3 In a small bowl, mix ricotta cheese, egg, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper.
4 In a large bowl, have your kids add the noodles, ricotta mixture, pasta sauce and shredded mozzarella cheese.
5 Transfer the mixture to a 13x9-inch pan and sprinkle with a little more mozzarella cheese if desired.
6 Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes before serving.

WEDNESDAY

Comfort Food Night

Broccoli, Ham and Cheese Twist

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Serves 4

1 cup broccoli florets
1 cup chopped deli ham
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 refrigerated container pre-made pizza dough
Salt and pepper, to taste
Italian seasoning, to taste

1 Steam, drain and chop the broccoli florets into bite-sized pieces. Chop the deli ham and shred the cheese.
2 Roll out the pizza dough and cut it in half vertically so there are 2 long pieces.
3 Divide the ingredients in half and let kids sprinkle ham, broccoli and cheese in the middle of the 2 pieces of dough.
4 Sprinkle on the salt, pepper and Italian seasoning to taste.
5 Carefully pinch the dough around the ingredients so you have 2 "filled tubes."
6 Twist the 2 filled crusts around each other and cut slits along the top of the dough.
7 Sprinkle the twist with a little more cheese and bake for 12 minutes, or until crust is cooked through.

TIP
Make sure the broccoli is completely dry to avoid a soggy crust later on.

THURSDAY

Chili Night

Hearty, Home-Style Chili

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 4 hours (slow cooker)
Serves 6

1 pound ground beef
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon onion powder
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 green bell pepper, diced
1 onion, diced
1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
2 (15.5-ounce) cans dark red kidney beans
2 teaspoons dried basil
1 teaspoon chili powder

1 In a large saucepan, brown the ground beef. Mix in the minced garlic, onion powder, salt and pepper.

2 Dice the bell pepper and onion and add to the mixture. Sauté for about 5 minutes, or until the vegetables start to soften.

3 While the meat mixture is cooking, let your kids pour in the diced tomatoes, tomato sauce and 2 cans of beans into the slow cooker.

4 Drain the meat mixture and add to the slow cooker. Mix well.

5 Add the basil, chili powder, and salt and pepper to taste.

6 Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Ladle into bowls and serve.

FRIDAY

Pizza Night

Chicken Pesto Pizza

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Serves 4

1 chicken breast
1 cup spinach leaves
1 cup Alfredo sauce, store-bought
1 tablespoon pesto, store-bought
1 ready-made pizza crust
1 cup shredded mozzarella
1 (8-ounce) can artichoke hearts
Italian seasoning, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. In a large skillet or grill pan, cook the chicken breast, seasoned as desired, 5 minutes on each side, or until cooked through. Chop the chicken and set aside.
3. Wash, dry and chop the spinach leaves.
4. Have your kids mix prepared Alfredo sauce and pesto in a small bowl. Spread over the prepared pizza crust.
5. Sprinkle the shredded mozzarella cheese, chopped spinach and as many artichokes as desired on top of the crust.
6. Add the chopped chicken, and sprinkle with salt, pepper and Italian seasoning.
7. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and crust is slightly crispy.

TIP

As you'll have quite a bit of the prepared sauces left over, plan ahead and make 2 or 3 of these pizzas at a time. Wrap each tightly in plastic wrap and freeze for future busy evenings!

Santa's Favorite Peppermint Oreos

Prep: 15 minutes

Serves 6

12 Oreo cookies

1 cup white chocolate chips

Crushed peppermints or candy canes

1 In a microwave-safe bowl, microwave the white chocolate chips for 1 minute and stir. Microwave again in 30 second intervals, stirring between each interval, until melted.

2 Let your kids dip half of each Oreo cookie into the white chocolate and then place them on a sheet of wax paper.

3 Before the chocolate starts to set, sprinkle the peppermint bits onto the chocolate.

4 Allow to set completely. Serve the cookies with a glass of milk.

Aimee Error has two energetic little boys and a husband in dental school. When she's not making PB&Js or washing scrubs, she loves to throw a pretty party, create things for her kids and make over spaces in her home. For more, visit theelephantofsurpriseblog.com.

Love Cooking?

Sneak a peek at the Twin Chefs' secret holiday recipes.

WRITTEN BY **SARAH YOON** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MEG SMITH**

If you're just learning to cook or simply discovering new flavors, the Twin Chefs have the perfect recipes for you. In Lilly and Audrey Andrews' book, *We Heart Cooking*, the girls share "totally tasty food for kids who love to cook."

When the twins were 3 years old, they got a whiff of adventure and they couldn't resist. They watched cooking shows and learned about ingredients. Soon, they wanted to try it themselves.

"We started begging our mom to try new things, so we would buy stuff—even eggplant—and really simply cook it, and we loved the whole process," Lilly says.

The Cooking Adventure

Any kitchen explorer needs a trusty friend to help when things don't go as planned or when a good recipe can get even better.

"We don't fight a lot, but like all siblings, we get a little mad at each other once in a while," Audrey says. "Our kitchen is a place to put those things aside and make something really delicious together." As they explore new territory, the twins encourage each other through every up and down.

Mistakes are always expected of beginners, so it's best to enjoy the process of trial and error. Even when the twins first started cooking, they weren't ready to create recipes for a book.

"At first, we made lots of messes and mistakes in the kitchen," Audrey says. She wants to inspire other kids to dive into the adventure and be OK when things don't turn out as they expect because "it's part of the learning process." Now, Lilly and Audrey traverse the kitchen with ease, and they know that you can, too.

Practicing for the Holidays

Even in the school year, you can practice in the kitchen and get ready to make traditional holiday treats. But as any kid knows, school nights don't leave much time for cooking.

"It can be a little bit hard because of homework," Lilly says. "Usually, we don't try crazy things because everybody has stuff to do, but we love cooking with the family, especially on the weekends. It's sort of like our family game night." Sneak in some practice on school nights and experiment with new flavors and ingredients on Saturdays; you'll be a pro in no time.

When Christmas rolls around, your practice will pay off. Ask your family about traditional recipes and learn how to make them yourself. Christmas is always at its best when everyone works together. For the twins, Christmas is "a huge family effort…to get everything prepared and ready to have a good time," Lilly says. "So, Audrey and I do a lot of the cooking with our dad." Every family has different traditions that make their family unique. Just as the twins make their grandma's family recipes and enjoy prime rib with Brussels sprouts, you can discover your favorite family quirks.

> "We started begging our mom to try new things, so we would buy stuff—even eggplant—and really simply cook it, and we loved the whole process."
> —Lilly, Twin Chef

"We don't fight a lot, but like all siblings, we get a little mad at each other once in a while ... our kitchen is a place to put those things aside and make something really delicous together."
—Audrey, Twin Chef

Sharpen your Skills

"Unless you practice with a knife quite a lot with an adult who knows how to use one, it would be safer to use these alternatives at first." —Audrey, Twin Chef

1 Roll a **PIZZA WHEEL** for safe slicing. Audrey loves using it for bread and soft veggies.

2 Use a **MINI CHOPPER** instead of big knives. "You just press down on the button and it chops things up," Lilly says. "We use it for herbs now instead of vegetables, but you can use it for veggies, too."

3 **KITCHEN SHEARS** are very useful. You can use these scissors on herbs, veggies and even meats.

4 A small, **SERRATED KNIFE** helps you safely transition into the big leagues. Practice before moving onto larger knives.

5 **ADULT SUPERVISION** is very important. Adults keep you safe and "they're great for reaching pots and pans or things you can't reach yourselves," Audrey says.

Thanksgiving Wrap

Bring Thanksgiving back to school in your lunchbox. "I love Thanksgiving Day sandwiches—they are my favorite thing ever. I would eat them all year if I could," Audrey says.

Prep: 4 minutes
Serves 4

4 romaine lettuce leaves
2 (10-inch) spinach tortillas
6 tablespoons garlic-and-herb spreadable cheese
4 tablespoons dried cranberries
4 (1-ounce) slices roast turkey breast

1 Rinse romaine leaves and pat dry with paper towels. Coarsely chop romaine. Set aside.

2 Lay tortillas in a single layer on a clean work surface. Spread cheese over 1 side of each tortilla, dividing it evenly and leaving a ½-inch edge. Sprinkle cranberries over the cheese, dividing them evenly. Arrange 2 turkey slices in a single layer over each tortilla. Then, top each with ½ of the chopped lettuce in a single layer.

3 Working with 1 wrap at a time, fold in the sides 1 inch. Fold up the bottom and continue rolling away from you to enclose the filling. Spread a tiny bit of cheese mixture on the inside of the top edge if necessary to keep the wrap closed. Repeat to roll up the remaining wrap.

4 Cut the wraps in half and serve.

Tip

Not in the mood for Thanksgiving? Transform your wrap like a pro. Let's say you love Indian food. Instead of a spinach tortilla, use whole wheat and replace turkey with roasted chicken. Lose the spreadable cheese and sprinkle curry powder in mayonnaise instead. Add golden raisins and grated carrots, and you're rocking a whole other wrap!

Red Velvet Pancakes

Though the cream cheese mixture tops everything off, Lilly shares a secret alternative: "You can also put it inside the pancakes, and then, when you cut it open, it is oozing out warm and delicious cream cheese."

Prep: 25 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Serves 4

FOR THE TOPPING

2 ounces (¼ cup) ⅓-less-fat cream cheese
3 tablespoons fat-free Greek yogurt
3 teaspoons confectioners' sugar

FOR THE PANCAKE BATTER

1 cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup sugar
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 large egg
¾ cup 1% low-fat milk
4 teaspoons red food coloring

1 **FOR THE TOPPING:** Place the cream cheese in a small microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for 15-20 seconds or until softened. Add the yogurt and confectioners' sugar. Stir until mixed and slightly fluffy. Set aside.

2 **FOR THE PANCAKE BATTER:** In a bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Crack the egg into another bowl and beat lightly with a whisk. Add in the milk and gently stir in the food coloring. Add the flour mixture and stir with a spoon just until mixed.

3 Heat a nonstick griddle or frying pan over medium-high heat. Spoon about ¼ cup batter per pancake onto the hot griddle or pan. Cook pancakes for 2-3 minutes or until the tops are covered with bubbles and edges of pancakes begin to look dry. Using a spatula, flip pancakes over and continue to cook for an additional 2-3 minutes or until bottoms are lightly browned and centers are no longer runny. Repeat with the remaining batter.

4 Serve the pancakes with cream cheese topping.

Holiday Favorites

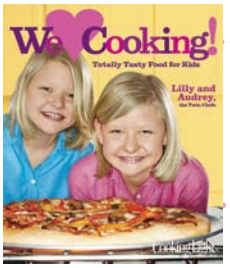
Food and family are the best gifts of the twins' holiday season.

1 **TWISMAS** is the week of celebration before their birthday. "Every day we give each other a little homemade gift," Lilly says. "We've done it since we were 6 years old."

2 **BAKING WITH DAD** makes the holidays special. They bake grandma's blonde brownies and peanut butter cookies. "We actually got her to put them in the book, even though they're a little bit of a secret recipe," Audrey says.

3 **RED VELVET PANCAKES** (left) are a Christmas breakfast tradition. "The red sort of is Christmas themed and it's really yummy," Lilly comments.

4 **CHRISTMAS DINNER TRADITIONS** include Brussels sprouts, crab cakes and prime rib. "We make a new little side every time," Audrey says. "It may not be traditional food for other families, but it is the tradition of ours."



We Heart Cooking **by Audrey and Lilly Andrews, published by Oxmoor House, ©2014; $21.95, oxmoorhouse.com.**

FESTIVE FOR ALL

Set a kid-friendly table and keep little hands busy with these fun and easy Thanksgiving crafts.

WRITTEN, STYLED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY
SARAH JANE O'KEEFE

This year, cross table décor off the to-do list and let the kids take the lead. With simple instructions and easy-to-find materials, cute touches can easily be made with a single trip to your local craft supply store. These crafts will keep even your littlest guests busy while the goodies of dinner are bubbling in the oven!

Quirky Turkey Place Cards

Instead of adding funky napkin holders down the middle of your stylish table, give kids extra napkins right where they need it most—at their plate.

Makes 1 place card

Pen
White or ivory craft paper
Scissors
1 brown fabric napkin
3 paper napkins
Ribbon

1 Begin by drawing a bone shape on your craft paper. The bone should be about 4 inches long. You can use a quarter to trace the knobs on the end of the bone.
2 Cut out the bone and write a guest's name on it, keeping it as close to the end of the bone as possible.
3 Lay the fabric napkin out flat. Open up 3 paper napkins and loosely crumple them into a ball roughly the size of a baseball.
4 Place the ball of napkins in the center of the fabric napkin and wrap the fabric napkin over and around the ball, gathering the ends together.
5 Tie a bow around the gathered fabric and adjust so that it resembles a turkey leg.
6 Add a turkey leg to each place setting and slip in the bone-shaped place cards.

Tip
If you use hot glue for this craft, make sure your younger guests have adult supervision!

Milk Made Fun

Eliminate the worry of toppling over grandma's heirloom glasses by giving kids low-profile jam jars with a fun accent.

Makes 1 glass

Brown, tan and orange felt
Scissors
Craft glue
Ribbon
1 empty jam jar
Hot glue (see tip, above) or glue dots
Pen
Paper straw

1 Lightly draw the ruffled shape of the turkey feathers onto the brown felt and cut.
2 For the turkey's body, draw a squash- or pear-like shape on the tan felt and cut.
3 Snip off a corner of the orange felt for the beak.
4 Layer together the turkey body and glue with craft glue.
5 Measure the necessary length of ribbon by wrapping it around the jar and leaving excess for a bow, if desired.
6 Folding the length of ribbon in half to find the center, glue the turkey to the ribbon with craft glue and let dry.
7 Wrap the finished accent around the jam jar and add a dab of hot glue or a glue dot to keep it in place. Add a fun striped straw and place on the table.

Tip
Use alphabet stickers to spell out seasonal phrases and add craft paper leaves to finish!

Grate-FULL Leftover Boxes

Let your kids personalize to-go boxes so that when they're full, they can take their leftover turkey dinner and treats home.

Makes 1 box

FOR THE THANKFUL BUNTING

Scissors
Printed craft paper
Baker's twine or ribbon
1 paper to-go box
Clear tape
Craft glue

FOR THE NAME TAG

Craft paper, various colors
Hole punch
Glue stick
Craft paper
Ribbon or baker's twine

1 **FOR THE THANKFUL BUNTING:** Cut rectangles out of printed craft paper. Snip the center bottom of each and fold back the flaps.

2 Trim a piece of baker's twine or ribbon to drape the front of the box with a little to spare.

3 Lay out the bunting pieces with the printed side facing down, making sure they are no wider than the box. Lay the baker's twine or ribbon across the bunting pieces and tape in place.

4 Add a small dab of glue to the backs and press onto the box.

5 **FOR THE NAME TAG:** Cut circles out of the craft paper, one slightly larger than the other. Glue together.

6 Punch a hole and add a guest's name.

7 Tie tag onto the box handle with baker's twine or ribbon.

Stuffed to the Brim

Add a sweet stuffed turkey on the side of the leftover boxes.

Makes 1 box

Scissors
Brown, yellow, red and orange craft paper
Tape
Glue stick
Marker
Alphabet stickers

Tip
Add patterned craft paper behind the too-full turkey for a bright contrast.

1 To make the turkey's body, cut a circle out of brown craft paper (approximately 3 inches across) and trim one side to make a flat edge.
2 To make the head, cut a small oval out of the same brown paper.
3 Cut feathers from yellow, red and orange paper. Cut out the beak and feet from orange paper.
4 With the body piece flat on the table, the flat edge toward you, place the head circle to the top center, taping to secure. Then, add a layer of feathers sticking out along the top curve the body piece, taping to secure. Secure the beak point straight up out of the top of the head piece with tape. It is OK to layer these pieces on top of each other from this side—this will be the back of the turkey.
5 Add glue to the back of the turkey body and press into place on the side of the box, lining up the straight edge of the turkey's bottom with the bottom of the box.
6 Using a glue stick, attach the turkey's feet.
7 Using a marker, draw a line for the guest's name followed by the word "is."
8 Just below the line, use alphabet stickers to spell out "stuffed."

Corny Doodlers

Use craft paper as a tablecloth or placemats so that kids can doodle while the adults mingle. Then, be sure to keep colored pencils within easy reach!

Makes 1 pencil holder

Ribbon
1 low-profile vase
Scissors
Glue stick
Orange, brown, yellow and tan felt or craft paper
Craft glue
Popcorn kernels
Colored pencils

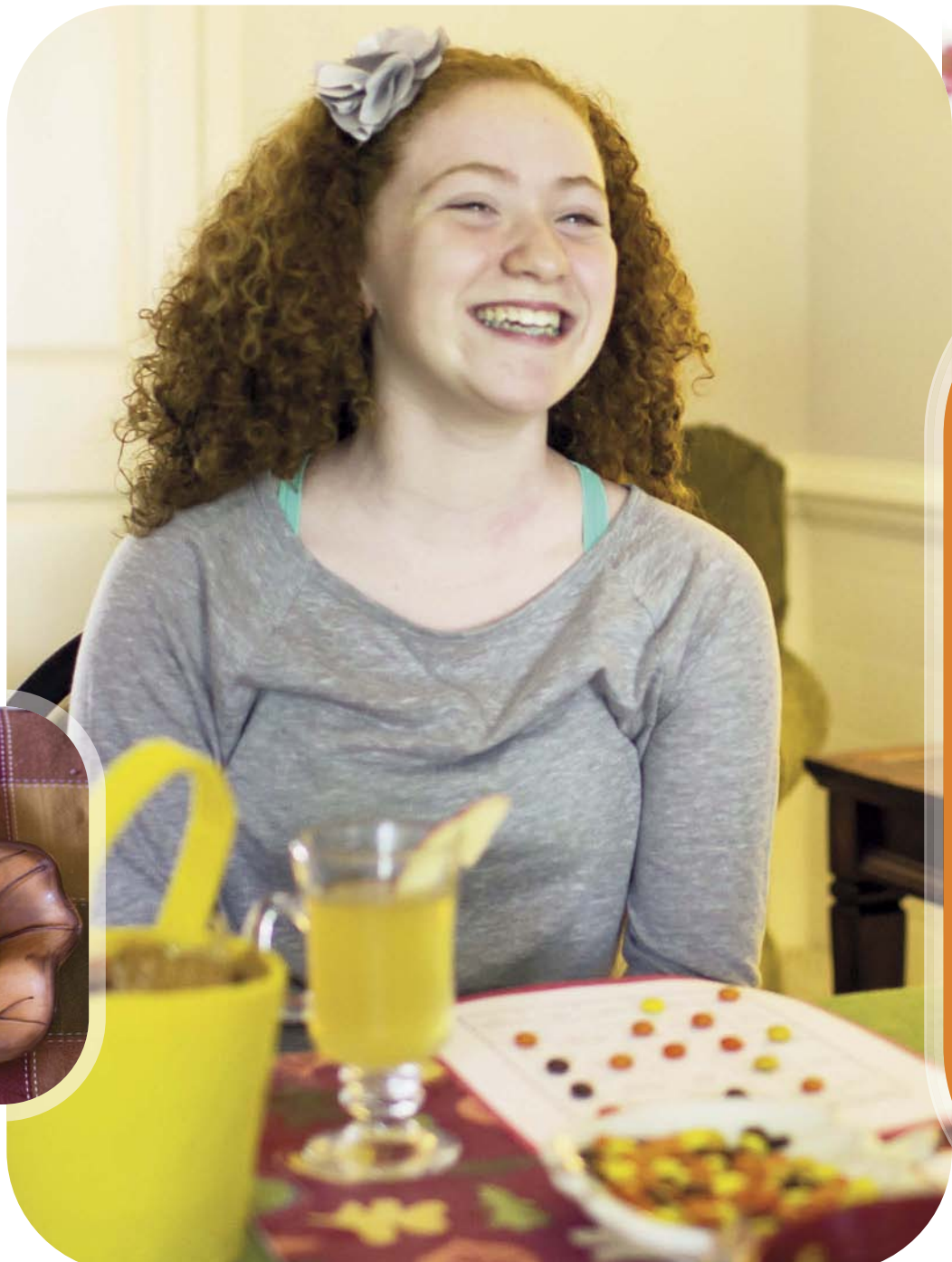
1 Wrap the ribbon around the rim of the vase to measure the appropriate length and trim.
2 Run a line of glue down the back of the ribbon and press into place around the rim of the vase.
3 Lightly draw leaf and acorn shapes onto the felt or craft paper and cut out. Let the kids play with mixing colors for unique leaves!
4 Add a dot of craft glue to the back of each shape and press onto the ribbon to secure.
5 Fill the vase ⅔ of the way full with popcorn kernels and then add the colored pencils. Top off the vase with kernels and set on the table.

See Shopping Guide, page 96.

Parade to VICTORY!

While you prepare for the big day, let the kids entertain themselves with Thanksgiving Day Parade Bingo.

WRITTEN BY **CATHY McCONVILLE**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JENNA MORRIS, CANDID HOUR PHOTOGRAPHY**



Watching the Thanksgiving Day Parade is a family tradition in our house. Throughout the past few years, playing bingo has been one of our favorite ways to watch the parade. This creative version of bingo will keep the kids entertained for a few hours, and who doesn't want that on a busy holiday morning? Add on the kid-friendly menu that's easy to make ahead and you've got a morning to be thankful for.

PARADE BINGO

1 To start, everyone gets a Bingo card. You can create your own cards or find a printable set online (see Shopping Guide, page 96).

2 Designate one player, an older sibling or adult, to help the younger kids who might not be able to read well. As you watch the parade, look at the bingo cards and call out what you see on the television. All players should look at their cards and call out the items, like "a marching band" or "a float," as they show up on the screen. Each player places a marker on the corresponding square on his or her card. You can use edible markers such as pretzels and M&M's or whatever markers you have on hand (Note: pennies are a great option and the little ones love keeping the coins and putting them in their piggy banks). The winner is the first player to complete an entire row of five horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

3 Most kids are pretty competitive, so if they win a game of Bingo, they'll want a reward of sorts. For younger children, small token prizes such as Hershey Kisses or a package of gum usually go over well. But as crazy as it may sound, as my kids have gotten older, they want to help out in the kitchen. So, for the past few years, I have let the kids pull from a jar of helper cards. The cards will have items like: help make the place cards for the dinner table, scoop the ice cream or cut the pies at dessert time. My kids love it and I get some help in the preparations for the day.

APPLE CIDER IS GREAT WARM OR COLD. My kids prefer it cold, but warming cider in a pan on the stove with a cinnamon stick for flavor is easy. Just heat about 4-6 cups of cider with 1 cinnamon stick until it is warm but not boiling. Garnish with a slice of apple and serve in cider glasses.

Homemade Cranberry Almond Granola with Greek Yogurt

Spoon your favorite yogurt (vanilla or honey) into cups, layer some of this homemade granola in between layers of yogurt and finish with a crunchy granola topping.

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 30 minutes
Serves 8

5 cups old-fashioned or rolled oats (not quick oats)
¾ cup vegetable oil
½ cup honey
1¼ cup dried cranberries
1 cup sliced almonds
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt
Cooking spray

1 Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2 In a small bowl, mix together oil and honey. In a separate large mixing bowl, combine oats, cranberries, almonds, vanilla and salt. Add oil and honey to the oat mixture and stir until all the oats are coated.
3 Transfer the oat mixture to a lightly sprayed baking sheet. Spread out the oats on a pan in an even layer. Bake for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove and let cool completely before serving. Store leftovers in airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

CORN AND BLUEBERRY MUFFINS ARE FAVORITES IN MY HOUSE. You can use a store-bought box mix to make the muffins the weekend prior to the holiday, and then freeze them. Pull them out the evening before and they are ready to go Thanksgiving morning.

One Terrific Turkey

This decorative caramel dip is a definite crowd pleaser. Get creative and use the fruit your kids like. Strawberries, grapes and pears will work fine as will mandarin or navel orange slices.

Prep: 5 minutes
Serves 4

1 container store-bought caramel dip (available in produce aisle, usually near the apples)
2 Granny Smith apples, sliced into medium wedges
2 Red Delicious or preferred red apple variety, sliced into medium wedges
2 dried cranberries or raisins, for eyes
1 piece of candy corn, for the beak
Thin pretzel sticks, for legs.

1 In the center of a serving plate, place the camel dip.
2 Fan out the apple slices around the dip container to resemble the turkey's feathers. Then, add cranberries or raisins for eyes, candy corn for the beak and pretzels for feet.

Gobble, Gobble, Crunch Mix

Kids love to mix different items to make their own snack mix. This year, let them create their own. You can use pretty much anything crunchy, sweet and salty, but this is a kid-tested guideline that goes over pretty well.

Prep: 2 minutes
Serve 6

1 (7.5-ounce) bag Bugles
1 cup dried cranberries
2 cups M&M's
2 cups "checker board" square pretzels
1 cup peanuts, almonds or cashews (consider using no-salt or raw nuts as there is a good amount of salt in this recipe)
1 cup candy corn

1 In a large bowl, combine all items and gently mix together. Be careful not to break the pretzels and Bugles.

Holi-Cheese

The name of this easy snack comes from my oldest daughter, who loves cheese. When she was little, she always wanted to help me cook during the holiday season, so I would give her a mini cookie cutter and a few slices of cheese and bread and let her "cook" with me. She would call it "holi-cheese" and the name just stuck.

Simply use fall-themed cookie cutters (leaves, apples and pumpkins) and cut out pieces of cheese. I used Colby-Jack and mild cheddar cheese, but you can use any firm cheese you like. Using either pre-cut cheese slices or blocks of cheese sliced lengthwise, just press the cookie cutter into the cheese and place each slice on plate with crackers. Try using different-shaped crackers (ovals, rectangles, squares and circles) and stacking the different shapes with a "holi-cheese" slice on top.

Whip up a batch of YEAR-ROUND FUN FOOD ADVENTURE with Master Chef Barton Seaver

Recipe: FAMILY FUN

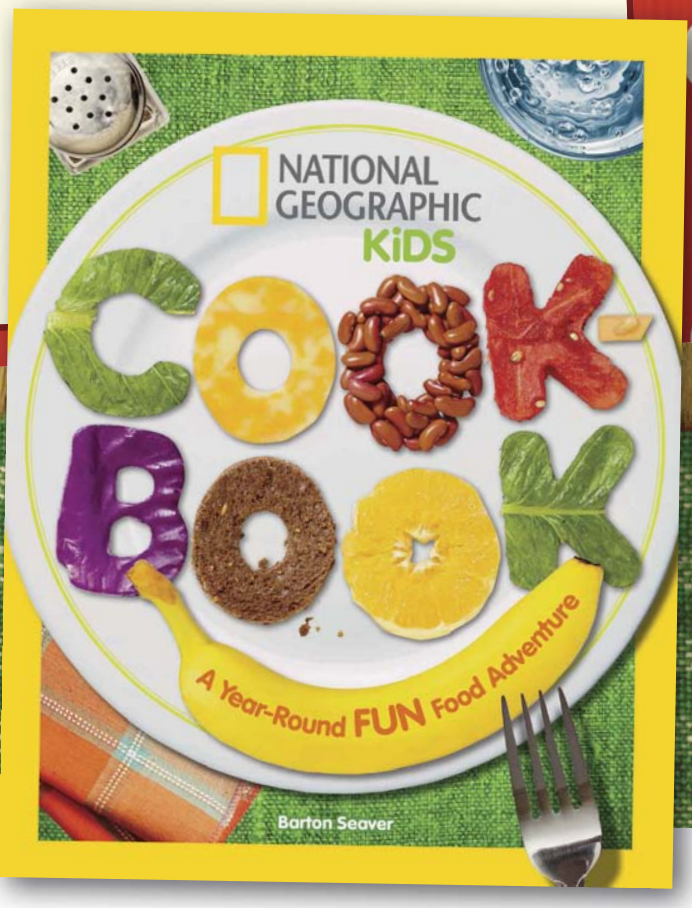
INGREDIENTS:
- National Geographic Kids Cookbook
- Kids and parents

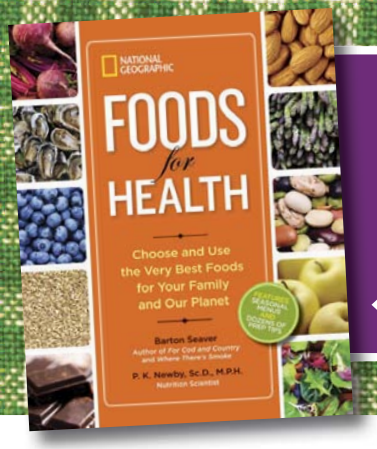
COMBINE:
- Yummy seasonal recipes
- Awesome activities
- Food-focused challenges

MIX:
- Holiday celebrations
- Cultural traditions

SEASON WITH:
- Weird-but-true food facts
- Foodie people profiles
- Tips on sustainability

SERVES:
FUN things to eat, do, and discover for the whole family!





"Eat food that's good for you and the planet!"
—Barton Seaver, author, master chef, National Geographic explorer, and sustainable food expert

← **ALSO AVAILABLE**

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KiDS

AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD
Find more fun stuff at NGKidsCookbook.com

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Home-cooked for the HOLIDAYS

Bring your whole family together over these 4 hot, seasonal dishes.

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS COOKBOOK: A YEAR-ROUND FUN FOOD ADVENTURE**
BY **BARTON SEAVER**

Is it any coincidence that the months that send us running inside to snuggle around a hot fire are the same that bring families back together from far and wide? That's why we celebrate our gathered connections with a nice hot, filling meal. A steaming turkey is a beautiful centerpiece to be thankful for and a bubbling stew makes coming in from the Christmas snowdrifts worth it.

This culinary merriment is at the center of Barton Seaver's new book, *National Geographic Kids Cookbook: A Year-Round Fun Food Adventure*, a seasonal look at how to cook and celebrate food month-to-month all year long. "Food is always the center of these family gatherings because a shared meal is the best way to make people feel at home," Seaver says. "Meals around the holidays tend to be feasts full of rich and delicious foods that warm the body as much as the spirit."

Here are four of Seaver's favorite holiday feast treats that kids can help prepare—from sweet and crunchy cranberry sauce for your Thanksgiving spread to a tender and juicy New England pot roast to celebrate Christmas in the American "melting pot."

New England Pot Roast

"In New England, pot roast is a traditional holiday meal," Seaver says. "It's also wonderfully easy to make! It was invented for just that purpose—throw everything together in one pot and let it cook until all the flavors come together."

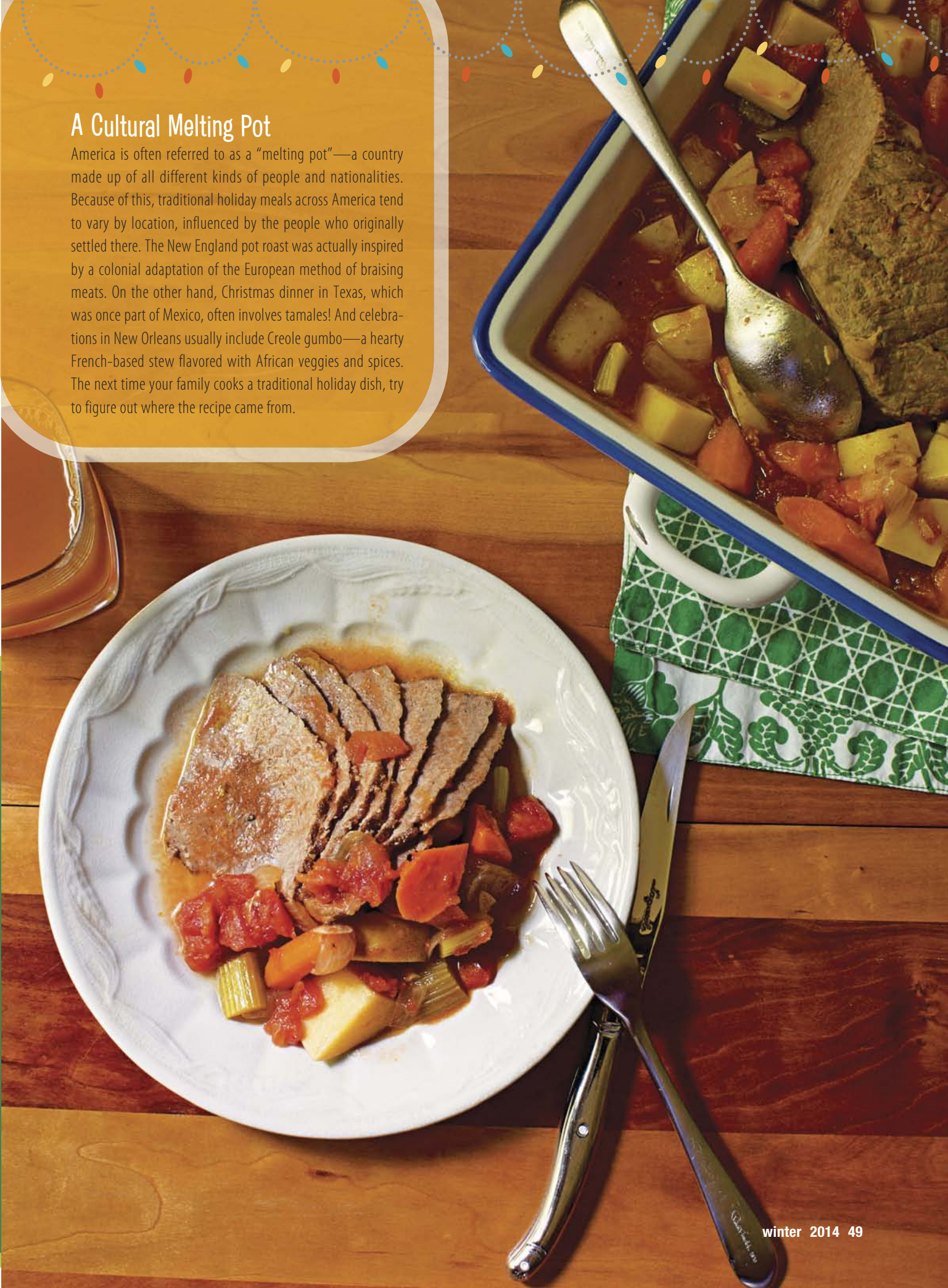
Prep: 20 minutes
Cook: 4 hours
Serves 4

2 pounds beef chuck roast
Salt
Pepper
2 tablespoons cooking oil
6 stalks celery, cut into 1-inch sections
6 carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch sections (or a few handfuls of baby carrots)
1 pound potatoes, cut into 1-inch chunks
1 (28-ounce) can diced, peeled tomatoes

1 Preheat the oven to 275°F. Season the beef with salt and pepper.
2 Heat a large ovenproof pot (one made entirely of metal with no plastic parts that could melt) over high heat. Add the oil, and when it is smoking hot, carefully add the beef. Cook it over high heat without moving it to give the meat a deep, caramelized crust. Turn the beef to another side and reduce the heat to medium.
3 Add the celery and carrot and stir to coat in the oil. Cook for another 5 minutes until the vegetables just begin to soften. Add the potatoes, tomatoes and 1 cup of water and season with salt.
4 Cover the pot and place it in the oven for 3½ hours. Then, remove it from the oven and check the tenderness of the beef with a knife. You should be able to slice it easily. If it is not quite tender, replace the cover and cook for another 30-60 minutes.
5 Remove the pot from the oven and allow it to cool for about 30 minutes. Remove the beef to a platter and slice it thinly. Place the vegetables around the beef and serve hot.

A Cultural Melting Pot

America is often referred to as a "melting pot"—a country made up of all different kinds of people and nationalities. Because of this, traditional holiday meals across America tend to vary by location, influenced by the people who originally settled there. The New England pot roast was actually inspired by a colonial adaptation of the European method of braising meats. On the other hand, Christmas dinner in Texas, which was once part of Mexico, often involves tamales! And celebrations in New Orleans usually include Creole gumbo—a hearty French-based stew flavored with African veggies and spices. The next time your family cooks a traditional holiday dish, try to figure out where the recipe came from.



Hot Cinnamon Apple Cider

"The cool of autumn nights calls for a steaming mug of cider to help warm the body," Seaver says. "This drink is fun to put together, and it makes your whole house smell like an apple orchard."

Prep: 5 minutes
Cook: 20 minutes
Serves 4

1 lemon
1 orange
1 quart apple cider
5 allspice berries
3 cloves
1 cinnamon stick

Did you know?
It takes about 36 apples to make one gallon of apple cider.

1 Juice the lemon and orange into a medium pot, placing the skin of half the lemon and half the orange in the pot with the juice. Discard the other halves. Add the cider, allspice and cinnamon and place the pot on the stove over medium heat.
2 Once the cider begins to steam and you begin to smell the yummy scents, turn the heat to low and simmer for another 10-15 minutes for the flavors to fully combine.
3 With a ladle, spoon the cider into mugs and enjoy while cuddled next to a fire or while walking in the chill evening.

Tip
Topping this dish with some pecan pieces adds a wonderful texture and balance to the sweetness of the potato.

Mashed Sweet Potatoes

"When you serve this dish, tell your guests that it is accentuated with just a hint of orange flavor and the aromatic pulse of nutmeg to give it a wafting allure," Seaver says. "They may not know what it means, but they'll be as impressed with your chef-speak as they are with your dish!"

Prep: 20 minutes
Cook: 40 minutes
Serves 6-8

2 pounds sweet potatoes
Juice of 1 orange
¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
Grated nutmeg

Cranberry-Pear Sauce

"In this recipe, the tart-sweetness of the cranberries combined with the delicious crunch of the pear will be the hit of the table—so give it a shot this Thanksgiving!"

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 50 minutes
Chill: 8-24 hours
Serves 4

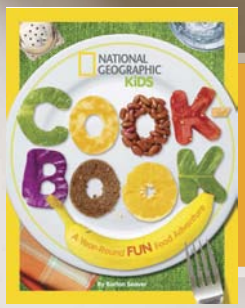
1 pound fresh cranberries
12 ounces orange juice
2 underripe pears, peeled and diced
½ cup walnut pieces
¼ cup maple syrup

1 In a medium pot, combine the cranberries and orange juice. Cook over medium heat for about 15-40 minutes, or until the berries begin to burst and the sauce begins to thicken (the amount of time varies depending on the ripeness of the cranberries).
2 Reduce the heat to low and add the pears, walnuts and maple syrup. Stir to combine and cook for another 10 minutes.
3 Remove from the heat and allow it to cool to room temperature. Then, place the sauce in a covered dish in the refrigerator overnight. Allow the dish to warm back up to room temperature before serving.

Did you know?

An estimated 21 million pounds of cranberry sauce is eaten each Thanksgiving.

1 Peel the potatoes and cut them into large chunks.
2 Place the potatoes in a large pot and cover them with water. Season generously with salt and add the orange juice. Cook over high heat until the water comes to a boil.
3 Turn the heat down to low and let simmer until the potatoes are soft but not yet falling apart, about 20-30 minutes. Drain and let cool for a few minutes.
4 Place the potatoes back into the pot and add the yogurt. Using a large spoon or fork, mash the potatoes and stir to combine the yogurt so that you have a smooth purée.
5 Place into a serving dish and garnish with the nutmeg. Serve hot.



National Geographic Kids Cookbook: A Year-Round Fun Food Adventure **by Barton Seaver is available wherever books are sold ($19.99). More than a cookbook, it's packed with scrumptious seasonal recipes, fun food challenges, tips on sustainability and more tasty tidbits. Visit ngkidscookbook.com.**

UP NORTH AND AT 'EM

Start off Christmas Day with a North Pole-inspired breakfast.

WRITTEN, STYLED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY **BIRD'S PARTY, BIRDSPARTY.COM**

Every year, kids stay up late to try to sneak a peek of Santa Claus snacking on cookies and leaving gifts. No doubt, if they could, the little spies would steal away in Santa's sack and take a surprise trip to the North Pole! This Christmas morning, when they've given up on a sleepover with Santa, surprise them by bringing the penguins and igloos of the North Pole down to them with a yogurt and granola breakfast.

North Pole Yogurt Bar

It's widely known that Elves love sugary treats for breakfast, but a self-serve yogurt bar means you can ensure your little elves will have loads of fun while choosing healthy options, too. Simply place your favorite brand of yogurt into a large serving bowl and surround it with "Santa's hats" strawberries and a cute penguin toy for the fun-factor.

Play with the words of the toppings you serve for the yogurt bar, the more creative the better. Crunchy oats become "Crispy Snow" and plain cereal is reimagined as "Penguin Food." There's no need to re-invent the wheel to make food fun—a simple play on words can add sparkle to everyday breakfast fare. Because it is Christmas, you can add candy balls or another **special sweet treat**. If there's one day to let your kids eat some candy with breakfast, Christmas is the perfect occasion!

Decant your toppings into **colored metal pails** and label them creatively with an adorable red-and-white-striped tag (see Shopping Guide, page 96).

Sweet Table Setting

All the décor and table setting can be done the night before Christmas, and all prepared in advance, to ensure that mom is also present to enjoy all the memories and merry-making of the day. The night before, spread a simple wipe-clean table covering on your table. For added festive cheer, top the tablecloth with glittery red placemats.

A penguin-shaped glass with a cute straw and an adorable penguin mug waiting to be filled with delicious yogurt complete each place setting. All of these items will help add the fun-factor to your table without much effort and are pieces that you can bring out each year, making for new memorable Christmas traditions.

Each little guest also gets a **goodie bag** filled with a bendable penguin toy, penguin notepad, candy cane pencil and candy penguin lollipop all decorated with a simple ribbon and a cute printable tag. This gift allows your guests to feel extra special and keep them entertained at the table (and after) while waiting for others to finish their breakfasts.

North Pole
Yogurt Bar
Santa's
Hats
Rudolph's
Snowballs
Crispy
Snowflakes
Christmas
Cranberries
Penguin
Treat
Season's Eatings
Season's Eatings

Arctic Add-ons

A separate table can be set up with **extra breakfast goodies** like buttery croissants, fruit juices, honey, preserves and hot cocoa. **Brightly colored sugar swizzle sticks** along with penguin lollipops look not only frosty and seasonal, but also serve as fun stirrers to a cup of warming hot cocoa.

A store-bought seasonal **panettone** is also dressed for the occasion and is a great accompaniment to the hot cocoa station. Simply attach candy sticks to the iced loaf with more icing (a thick paste of confectioners' sugar and water), set in the fridge until hard and decorate with a printable banner and marshmallow penguins. This sweet breakfast bread can be served with the hot cocoa after breakfast while everyone is tearing through wrapping paper and opening the gifts!

See Shopping Guide, page 96.

FOOD *with* FEELING

Bake your heart out for your loved ones with these 8 edible gifts.

Tip

Use separate pieces of parchment paper for each tree so you can remove them as they are finished, just in case they have different melting times.

Tip

For a sweet tree topper, just press in an un-melted candy to the top of a tree before the tree has fully set.

Cookies, truffles and bark—the usual suspects, while tasty, have been done time and time before. It's time to try something different for your neighborhood cookie tins! Wrangle up the little ones and try these fun edible gifts this year. From adorable marshmallow snowmen to beautiful white-chocolate snowflake brownies, there's something sweet for everyone on your block.

Triangle Tree Pops

Sweet and beautiful Christmas tree pops are a breeze to make. Try gifting an entire forest to the neighbors!

FROM **CANDY AISLE CRAFTS** BY **JODI LEVINE**

Prep: 2 minutes
Bake: 5-9
Cool: 1 minute
Makes 5 pops

20-25 hard candies (such as spearmint starlight mints, green apple or blue raspberry Jolly Rancher hard candies or clear crystal mints), 4-5 per pop
5 sticks

1 Preheat the oven to 275°F. Line a baking sheet with small pieces of parchment paper, one for each pop.
2 On a piece of paper, arrange 4-5 candies to form a rectangle. (If using starlight mints, position 4 together to make a square and center the fifth candy at the top.)
3 Place in the oven for 5-9 minutes (depending upon how melted you would like your candy). Remove and let cool for 1 minute.
4 Using oven mitts, take the candy, still on the parchment paper, off the baking sheet and use scissors to cut it into a triangle or tree shape. You can cut through the candy and parchment paper at the same time.
5 Return each tree to the baking sheet on a new piece of parchment. Then, push in or press on a stick and twist to coat it in candy. If it needs smoothing, return it to the oven for about 2 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool.

No-Bake Triple Chocolate Brownies

These fudgy brownies bites are delicious ways to spread holiday cheer without even turning on your oven!

FROM **BAKELESS SWEETS** BY **FAITH DURAND**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **STACY NEWGENT**

Prep: 5-7 minutes
Chill: 1 hour
Makes 16 brownies

1 generous cup graham cracker crumbs, from 8-10 whole graham crackers
½ cup finely chopped toasted hazelnuts
¼ cup cocoa powder
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¾ cup sweetened condensed milk
4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted

1 Line an 8-inch square baking dish with 2 crossed strips of parchment or wax paper, letting the long ends hang over the sides of the dish for easy removal when finished. Grease lightly with butter or baking spray.
2 In a large bowl, mix together the crackers, hazelnuts, cocoa and salt. Then, pour in the sweetened condensed milk. (If desired, you can set the can in a pan of warm water to make it easier to scrape out and stir in the milk.)
3 Pour in the melted chocolate and stir firmly to thoroughly combine. Scrape the mixture into the prepared pan.
4 Cover with a piece of plastic wrap and press firmly into the pan. Chill for at least 1 hour, until firm enough to cut.
5 Lift the parchment paper to remove the brownies from the pan. Cut the brownies into small squares. They will be fudgy but quite firm. Store leftover brownies in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

Marshmallow Snowman

This snowman is fun to make and makes a great gift that will never melt!

FROM **CANDY AISLE CRAFTS**
BY **JODI LEVINE**

½ cup chocolate chips
2 regular marshmallows
1 chocolate wafer cookie
2 black nonpareils
6-8 black sugar pearls
1 orange gumdrop
1 jumbo marshmallow
1 piece of rainbow-striped sour belt candy
1 white frosted cupcake (optional)

1 To make the hat, melt the chocolate chips in a double boiler. Drop 1 regular marshmallow into the melted chocolate and roll it around with a fork until it's well coated. Lift the marshmallow out of the chocolate with the fork and let the excess drip back into the bowl or pot. Carefully center it, flat side down, on the chocolate wafer cookie. Refrigerate to harden.

2 To make the head, cut a very thin sliver off the flat bottom of the remaining regular marshmallow; the sticky bottom will be the bottom of the head. Use a toothpick to poke 5 holes: 2 for eyes and 3-4 for the mouth. With the now-sticky toothpick, pick up the nonpareils for eyes and sugar pearls for the mouth and push them into the holes.

3 Use the toothpick to dig a bigger hole for the nose. Cut an angled piece off the orange gumdrop for the carrot nose. Roll it between your fingers to make it pointy. Cut a sliver off the back of the nose so that it's sticky and push it into the hole.

4 To make the torso, poke 3 holes into the jumbo marshmallow for the buttons. Use the toothpick to pick up the sugar pearls and push them in.

5 Press the head onto the body. Dab some melted chocolate on top of the head and attach the hat.

6 Cut a strip of sour belt candy in half lengthwise and tie it around the snowman's neck, for a scarf.

7 If desired, put the snowman on top of a frosted cupcake and press in to secure. Place another sugar pearl "button" onto the frosting, if desired.

Starlight Mint Meringues

The classic look of starlight mints get a light and fluffy twist with these beautiful and deliciously minty meringue cookies.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ELISE PORTALE**

Prep: 10-15 minutes
Bake: 2 hours
Cool: 20 minutes
Makes 40-60 meringues

3 egg whites, room temperature
⅛ teaspoon cream of tartar
¾ cup granulated sugar
⅛ teaspoon peppermint extract
Red gel food coloring

1 Space out the oven racks to divide the oven into thirds and preheat the oven to 200°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

2 In a clean, dry bowl (preferably glass or stainless steel) of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat together the egg whites and cream of tartar on medium until soft peaks form.

3 Increase the speed to high. Then, 1 tablespoon at a time, slowly add ½ cup of the sugar, whisking until stiff peaks form.

4 Using a rubber spatula, fold in the remaining ¼ cup of sugar. Then, add in the peppermint extract.

5 Using a small paintbrush, paint 3 equally spaced stripes of red gel food coloring inside a clean pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round tip, each line going from the fitted tip to the top of the bag.

6 Spoon the raw meringue into the bag, careful not to smear the red stripes with the spoon. On a plate, pipe out meringue until color starts to appear; this excess meringue can be added back into the pastry bag.

7 In a circular motion, pipe meringue kisses onto the parchment sheet.

8 Simultaneously bake both trays until the meringues are completely dry, about 2 hours, rotating the sheets from top to bottom and front to back after 1 hour. Let the sheets cool completely on wire racks.

Dipped Ritz Cookies

Buttery, filled with caramel or peanut butter and covered in chocolate, these little cookies are easily made in huge batches for gift-making.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **EMILY WALKER, FAVFAMILYRECIPES.COM**

Prep: 10 minutes
Bake: 5 minutes (caramel cookies)
Set: 20-30 minutes
Makes 1-14 dozen cookies

FOR CARAMEL COOKIES

1 box of Ritz crackers
1 bag of Rolo caramel candies

FOR PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

1 box of Ritz crackers
1 cup peanut butter
½ cup confectioners' sugar

FOR THE CHOCOLATE COATING

Chocolate chips or baking chocolate bars
White chocolate chips or baking white chocolate bars
Sprinkles (optional)

Tip

To dip the cookies, use a plastic fork with the middle prongs broken off to flip the cookies in the chocolate. Then, set the cookie on the fork and gently tap it against the side of the bowl to smooth out and drip off the excess chocolate.

1 **FOR CARAMEL COOKIES:** Preheat the oven to 300°F.
2 Lay out half of the crackers face down on a cookie sheet. Top each cracker with one Rolo and bake for about 5 minutes.
3 Remove from oven and quickly top each softened Rolo candy with another cracker. You want to press it down a little, but not so much that the caramel comes out the sides. Let cool completely before dipping.
4 **FOR PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES:** In a small bowl, mix together the peanut butter and confectioners' sugar. This will give you a thicker, sweeter filling to work with.
5 Take a cracker and top it with a little heap of peanut butter. You want to press it down a little, but not so much that the peanut butter comes out the sides.
6 **FOR THE CHOCOLATE COATING:** In a small glass bowl, heat the regular chocolate in the microwave in 30-second increments until the chocolate is completely melted. Dip about 10 caramel cookies at a time (using most of the chocolate). Then, melt more chocolate and repeat until all caramel cookies are dipped.
7 Repeat the dipping process with white chocolate for the peanut butter cookies.
8 If desired, add sprinkles before the chocolate sets. Then, placed each dipped cookie onto parchment or wax paper to cool and set completely.

Spicy Peanut and Toasted Coconut Cookies

Creamy peanut butter and a dash of cayenne pepper liven up these tasty toasted coconut treats.

FROM **BAKELESS SWEETS** BY **FAITH DURAND**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **STACY NEWGENT**

Prep: 5 minutes
Cool: 10 minutes
Makes 24 cookies

1 cup shredded unsweetened coconut
3 cups chow mein noodles
½ cup honey or light corn syrup
½ cup packed brown sugar
1 cup natural unsweetened peanut butter, well stirred
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon cayenne

1 Line a large baking sheet with wax or parchment paper.
2 Heat a skillet over medium heat and add the coconut. Toast the coconut, stirring frequently, until it is light brown and crispy. Pour coconut into a large bowl and stir in the chow mein noodles.
3 In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the honey or corn syrup and the sugar and bring the mixture to a boil. Turn the heat to low and simmer for 1 minute; then, turn off the heat and stir in the peanut butter until fully incorporated. The mixture should look glossy.
4 Stir in the vanilla, salt and cayenne. Immediately stir the mixture into the coconut and noodles. Drop spoonfuls of the mixture onto the baking sheet. Cool for 10 minutes, or until set. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Snowflake Princess Brownies

Chewy chocolate brownies get the royal treatment with extra-creamy frosting and a delicate edible snowflake garnish.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ELISE PORTALE**

Prep: 10 minutes
Bake: 25-30 minutes
Cool: 30 minutes
Makes 12 brownies

1 box preferred brownie mix
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
8 ounces cream cheese, chilled
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 cups confectioners' sugar
20-30 drops blue food coloring

1 Prepare brownies according to box instructions. Let cool completely before slicing and frosting.
2 In a large bowl, cream the butter until smooth. Add the cream cheese and beat until creamy.
3 Add the vanilla extract and confectioners' sugar, ½ cup at a time, and mix on a low speed until well combined.
4 Gradually add food coloring a few drops at a time, beating in between each addition, until the desired frosty blue color is achieved.
5 Pipe frosting on cooled brownies. Decorate with white non-pareils, dragees or Royal White Snowflakes (see sidebar, above).

Royal White Snowflakes

Using a double boiler or microwaving in 30-second increments, melt 2 cups of white chocolate chips. Once melted, add to a plastic zip-top bag and let cool for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Once the chocolate is cool enough to handle, cut off a corner of the zip-top bag to make a small hole. Carefully, pipe your snowflake design (a 2-inch + sign with a small X over the top). If desired, place gold or silver dragees in the center and at the main spires of your snowflake! Place baking sheets in the fridge and let set for 4 hours or overnight. Remove from the parchment carefully when decorating.

Tip

Red cinnamon candies or mini candy-coated chocolate candies would also make cute shiny noses for these tasty reindeer.

Tip

If you prefer, you can dip chocolate sandwich cookies into melted white chocolate. Attach the antlers and nose before the chocolate hardens and scrap the decorating icing!

Easy Reindeer Cookies

Sweet little white reindeer are a cute gift that is tasty and only takes 15 minutes to put together.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF GENERAL MILLS

Prep: 15 Minutes
Makes 12 cookies

- **12 white fudge-coated, creme-filled chocolate sandwich cookies**
- **24 miniature pretzel twists**
- **1 can (6.4-ounces) white decorating icing**
- **1 tube (0.68-ounces) black decorating gel**
- **12 small round chewy red or green candies (from a 9.2-ounce box)**

1. Place cookies on a tray or flat surface.
2. Break pretzel twists in half to form antlers. Place a small amount of white decorating icing on the bottom edge of each pretzel; attach 2 pieces at the top of each cookie to form reindeer antlers.
3. Using black decorating gel, make 2 small dots to form eyes on each cookie.
4. Cut the top 1/3 off each red or green candy; attach with small amount of icing to form a nose on each cookie.

For more on the books featured in this story, see The Bookshelf, page 95.

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SCENIC TRANSFERWARE PLATTER

The timeless look of transferware is a holiday favorite at the dinner table. This serving piece will become a cherished part of your holiday tradition. Small, 13” H x 16” W; large, 14” H x 17” W.

$88 plus shipping and handling*

SALT & PEPPER SHAKERS - TOMATOES & PEAS

These charming salt-and-pepper shakers are replicas of vintage cans of vegetables found in French markets. Keep them on your countertop or table for a pop of color. They make a unique gift for collectors of vintage-French items.

$9.95 plus shipping and handling*

WINTER CRANBERRY DISHES FOR FOUR

Handpainted cranberries add seasonal color to this set of dinner plates, salad plates, soup bowls and mugs. They are the perfect place settings for your holiday table. Oven, microwave and dishwasher safe. Lead and cadmium free. Set includes 4 dinner plates (10” each), 4 salad plates (7” each), 4 soup bowls (7-3/4” each) and 4 tea cups (4-1/2” H x 3” D).

$244 including shipping and handling*

TALL METAL AND GLASS DOME- LARGE

This glass dome and tall, rustic base will bring a farmhouse feel to any home. Great for displaying baked items. Measures 10.5” W x 17” H.

$44.95 plus shipping and handling*

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This set of four small ceramic plates is just right for a tea party or luncheon. Their charming designs make them attractive kitchen accessories when they are not in use. Each plate measures 8.3” dia.

$24.95 plus shipping and handling*

PRINCESS PRINT

A print fit for a princess! Display this image of a beautiful tiara with floral embellishments for a romantic fairytale look.
Measures 8” H x 10” W.

$65 plus shipping and handling*

BERRIES ‘N BRANCHES CAKE DOME/STAND

Perfect for your winter tablescape, this cake dome with red berries and gold details brings the season’s beauty to your table. Proudly hand-painted in the USA.

$105 plus shipping and handling*

CHILDREN'S FARMHOUSE TABLE AND CHAIRS SET

Handcrafted from solid wood, this set will last for years of enjoyment. For children up to 6 years old. Made of solid cypress. Table measures 30" L x 22" W x 17.5" H. Chairs measure 10" H from floor. Can be adjusted for older children.

$242.96 plus shipping and handling*

GOLD GARLAND CAKE DOME/STAND

Boughs of garland on a gold background add a festive touch to your holiday table. Start a new holiday tradition with this gorgeous cake stand. Proudly hand-painted in the USA.

$105 plus shipping and handling*

MOSAIC CHRISTMAS BOWL

The festive, hand-painted design of this unique Christmas bowl is brought to life with all of the vibrant holiday colors. Use it for side dishes, soups or desserts. Measures 6" dia. Proudly hand-painted in the USA.

$26 plus shipping and handling*

VINTAGE BLUE CAKE STAND

Show your vintage style at your next dinner party with this elegant vintage cake stand featuring a charming blue and rusted patina. Measures 13.5" W x 5" H.

$34.95 plus shipping and handling*

*For international destinations, please email us at customerservice@plaidparasol.com or call us toll free at (800) 764-6278.

Spruced up with SUGAR AND SPICE

Gather up the neighborhood elves for a gingerbread party.

WRITTEN, STYLED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY **SARA DE ST. JEAN, HOMESPUNHOSTESS.COM**

The classic look of gingerbread decorated with candies, sprinkles and icing instantly evokes the holidays. So, what better way to kick off the season than hosting a gingerbread decorating party for the kids? Their colorful creations can brighten your home for the whole season or just a few hours before being gobbled up. Either way, getting creative with sugar and spice equals a lot of fun for little bakers.

Sweet Styling

Fun and colorful printed items really make this party look pulled together and cheerful. Send invitations that set the tone and add cute printable decorations, such as a "Sweet" banner for your dessert table, a decoration station table sign, mini icing bottle wraps, "Be Merry" bottle wraps and "Catch me if you can" straw flags.

Ready the Workshop

Preparing for your little baking elves is easy. First, set up each place setting with large pieces of colorful scrapbook paper as an inexpensive placemat. Then, use colorful baking cups to hold individual portions of candy for decorating. Set 4-ounce squeeze bottles of icing with custom labels at each place setting; these small bottles are easy to fill and easy for little hands to work with.

Keep all the bakers looking sharp (and clean)—inexpensive children's aprons purchased on Amazon and embellished with Ric-Rac and pom-poms make great favors and the girls look adorable in them. You can even have the kids' names embroidered by a local sports shop for a few dollars each.

Build It

Keep things simple with pre-built gingerbread houses. By skipping the frustration of the building (and falling apart) of the houses, the little bakers can start right at the fun part—decorating! Gingerbread men (recipe, right) are easy to make yourself and their tastiness makes them that easier to eat, too.

To keep the decorations on the gingerbread and out of the elves' sneaky little mouths, prepare some sweets to snack on. Simple treats like chocolate peppermint cake pops, cupcakes topped with gingerbread peeps and a store-bought mini gingerbread cake are perfect for the bakers, especially when served with ice-cold milk.

Finally, while the gingerbread houses are drying, be sure to read the story of the Gingerbread Man for a little extra holiday fun!

See Shopping Guide, page 96.

The Best Chewy Gingerbread Cookies

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Chill: 1 hour
Cook: 8-11 minutes
Makes 24 cookies

3 cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup dark brown sugar
1½ tablespoons ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon ground cloves
½ teaspoon salt
¾ teaspoon baking soda
12 tablespoons (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, slightly softened and cut into bite-sized pieces
¾ cup molasses
2 tablespoons milk

1 In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with paddle attachment, stir together the flour, sugar, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, salt and baking soda at low speed until combined. Add the butter pieces. Mix at medium-low speed until mixture is a sandy consistency.

2 Reduce the speed to low and gradually add the molasses and milk. Mix until dough is evenly moistened. Increase the speed to medium and mix until thoroughly combined.

3 Divide the dough in half and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

4 Preheat the oven to 350°F and line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.

5 When the dough is chilled enough to work with, flour a working surface and roll out the dough between 2 pieces of parchment paper until it is about ¼ inch thick.

6 Using cookie cutters, cut out gingerbread men and place them about 1 inch apart on the prepared cookie sheets. Bake for 8-11 minutes. Cool the cookies to room temperature on a wire cooling rack before decorating.

Breakfast with *Mrs. Claus*

The morning after presents are delivered, treat your little boys and girls to a whimsical breakfast party.

WRITTEN, STYLED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY **ANDRESSA HARA, TWINKLETWINKLELITTLEPARTY.COM**

If you live in a place where warmer winters are the norm, such as Southern California or Florida, an outdoor Christmas picnic can be a blast! However, if your green grass is covered in snowdrifts, you can easily move this party indoors. Switch out the hanging picnic table with a dining room or breakfast table and use color-coordinated tablecloths!

What's sweeter than milk and cookies with Santa Claus?

Breakfast with his lovely missus, of course!

When it comes to getting kids to enjoy a Christmas breakfast, keeping it simple yet fun and pretty is key. And no cute breakfast is complete without miniature foods, including what most kids love—pancakes and waffles! Christmas is a busy season, so make it easy for yourself and try store-bought items. With a little bit of creativity, you can dress up anything for the occasion!

Merry Menu

For the main breakfast table, stack mini pancakes in simple cupcake liners found at a local craft store. Top them off with printable toppers that match the theme. Mini waffles can also be neatly stacked and simply decorated with lollipop sticks and a holiday ribbon. Kids love how easily they can grab their own mini stacks and enjoy breakfast. Other yummy morning items you can add include homemade orange-cranberry muffins and mini cinnamon apple loaves.

To top it all off, serve whole milk in glass bottles, peppermint candy milkshakes topped with pink marshmallows and, of course, hot cocoa.

Peppermint Candy Milkshake

Prep: 5 minutes
Makes 2 shakes

3 cups vanilla ice cream
1½ cups milk
1 tablespoon crushed peppermint candies
Whipped cream, for garnish
Pink or white marshmallows, for garnish

1 Using a blender, blend ice cream and milk until smooth. Add crushed peppermint candies and blend another 5 seconds. Pour into glasses and top with whipped cream and marshmallows.

Trimmings and Tidings

Can't wait to use those pretty plates and napkins you have in your cabinets? Impress your little guests with a beautiful tablescape this season. The kids feel special when there's a festive table where they can sit and eat. A simple table made of pallets suspended from a tree is magical and gets everybody excited. Decorate the table using other breakfast items, such as festive mini white chocolate peppermint parfaits and donuts.

White Chocolate Peppermint Parfaits

RECIPE BY **JENNY RAULLI, BLOOMDESIGNSONLINE.COM**

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Chill: 2 hours
Serves 4-6

2 cups heavy whipping cream
1 cup white chocolate chips
3 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
Candy canes, crushed

1 In a microwave-safe bowl, heat whipping cream until steaming, about 2 minutes. Pour in white chocolate chips. Let sit for a few minutes and then whisk until smooth.

2 Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until completely chilled.

3 Pour the mix into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment and mix on medium high. When soft peaks form, add confectioners' sugar. Continue whisking until medium to stiff peaks form.

4 Put the mousse into piping bags. Begin layering the white chocolate mousse and candy cane pieces starting and ending with the mousse.

Perfect Hot Cocoa

Prep: 4 minutes
Serves 5

½ cup sugar
¼ cup cocoa, sweetened
Dash salt
⅓ cup hot water
4 cups (1 quart) milk
¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
Miniature marshmallows or sweetened whipped cream (optional)

1 In a medium saucepan, combine the sugar, cocoa and salt, then stir in the water. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until the mixture begins to boil. Then, stir for 2 minutes. Add the milk, stirring constantly and heat to a serving temperature without boiling.

2 Remove from heat; add vanilla. Beat with whisk or hand mixer until foamy. Serve topped with marshmallows or whipped cream if desired.

Spiced Apple Mini Loaves

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 1 hour
Makes 3 mini loaves

3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground clove
½ teaspoon ground allspice
Pinch of salt
⅔ cup butter, chilled
¾ cup brown sugar, packed
1 large baking apple, such as Granny Smith, peeled, cored and chopped
¾ cup milk
2 large eggs, lightly beaten

1 Preheat the oven 350°F. Grease or line 3 mini loaf pans.

2 In large bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, spices and salt. Then, cut the butter into thin slices and add it to the bowl. Using your fingers, combine the butter and dry mixture until it is crumbly.

3 Stir in the brown sugar. Then, add the apple, milk and eggs and stir well. The batter should be pretty thick, but if it seems too dry, add a tablespoon of milk at a time until the proper consistency is achieved.

4 Using a rubber spatula, scrape the batter into the prepared mini loaf pans. Bake for 1 hour or until a cake tester inserted into the center of a loaf comes out clean.

5 Turn the loaves out and let cool on a wire rack before serving.

Sweet Souvenirs

After enjoying their fun Christmas breakfast, send the kids home with Mrs. Claus sandwich cookies and pop tarts neatly wrapped in paper bags embellished with a "Breakfast with Mrs. Claus" sticker. It's a merry breakfast, for one and all!

See Shopping Guide, page 96.

Check it Twice

Add a few more items to your wish list this season.

WRITTEN BY **ZOE ZHANG**
STYLING AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ELISE PORTALE**

You wake up reluctantly because you know it's too early—you've spent the previous night arranging presents late to ensure no one is spying on "Santa." That excited patter of feet down the hall gets louder and louder, and you're resigning yourself to the pandemonium the morning will undoubtedly bring. Soon enough, you're pulled, half-asleep, to the living room, tugged by eager hands. The sound of ripping paper and your morning coffee begins to wake you, and in quiet awe, you see a happy smile spread from cheek to cheek when it hits you: It's Christmas morning.

From stockings stuffed to the brim and glittering wrapping paper to the perfect ornament or a new favorite toy, here are the must-have items to make Christmas morning as wonderful as your kids dream it will be.

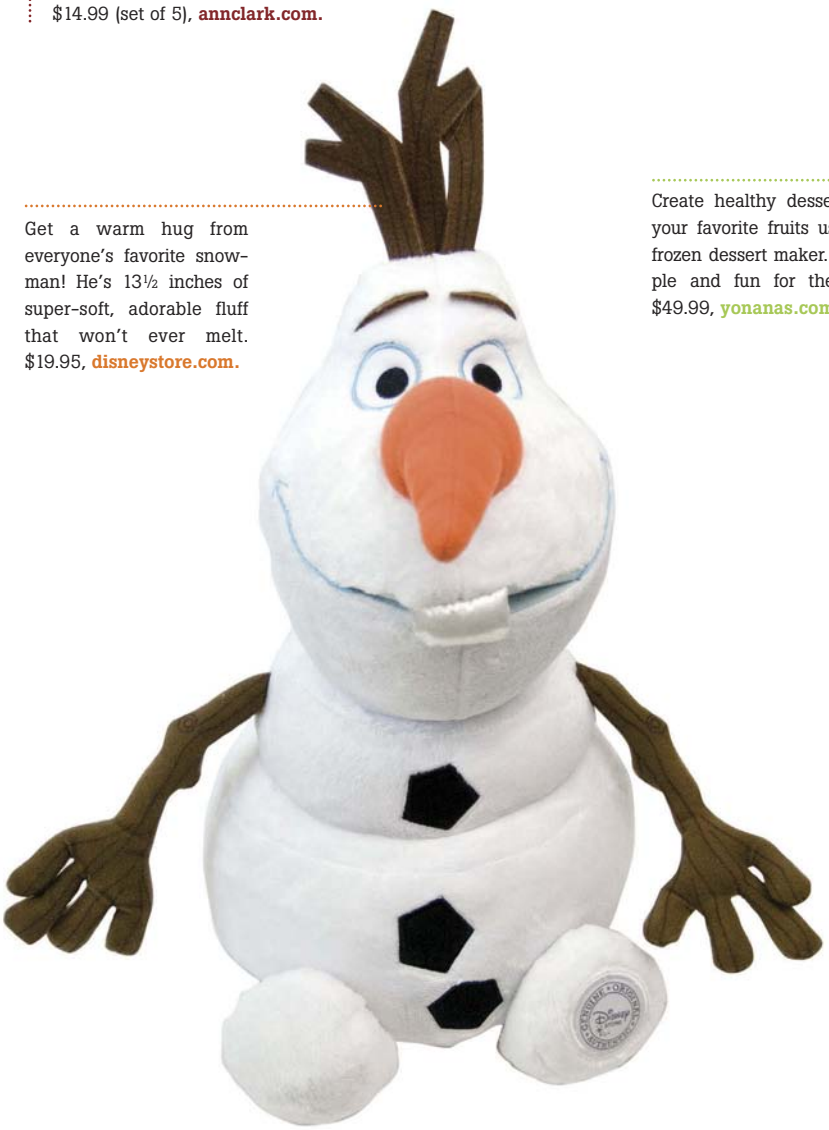
Add a shabby-chic look to your Christmas décor this year with these adorable stockings. Made from burlap, choose one of seven different styles and then personalize it! $42.00 (each), **pinkslipinspiration.etsy.com.**

Make your Christmas a little greener with these festive, simply-designed wrapping papers that are made of 90% recycled paper, a design exclusive to Nashville Wraps. $20 per 24"x85' cut, **nashvillewraps.com.**

Made of authentic wool and polyester blend, these long stockings are ready to be stuffed for the season. You can get them personalized with a gorgeous embroidery thread. $37.50 (each), **eugenie2.etsy.com.**

Bake your favorite holiday shapes with this gift set that comes complete with cookie cutters and recipes for cookies and frosting. Tree, moose, snowflake, snowman and star shapes included. $14.99 (set of 5), **annclark.com.**

Jennifer Low's two books both offer 100 amazing recipes your children can really make. Let the little ones into the kitchen! $24.95–$29.95, **whitecap.ca.**



Get a warm hug from everyone's favorite snowman! He's 13½ inches of super-soft, adorable fluff that won't ever melt. $19.95, **disneystore.com.**

Create healthy desserts with your favorite fruits using this frozen dessert maker. It's simple and fun for the family. $49.99, **yonanas.com.**

This Magic School Bus-shaped kit has everything a young budding scientist needs to explore the microscopic world. It comes complete with a real working microscope that magnifies up to 600 times. $39.95, **scientificsonline.com.**

Beautify your house by decorating with this simple and elegant ivory snowflake by Lenox. $19.99, **bedbathandbeyond.com.**

Needle-felted from 100% sheep's wool and hung from a natural hemp thread, this cardinal sits an adorable 3 inches tall on her twig perch. $21.00, **fairyfolk.etsy.com.**

Looks good enough to almost eat! Hang this glittering confectionary-inspired ornament, made from scratch, on your tree, or let it sit solo as a charming centerpiece for the holidays. $10.75, **amymillerdesigns.com.**

Add these clear glass hand-crafted ornaments to your tree, patterned with a star-flake: the unique cross between a star and a snowflake! $12.99 (set of 4), **bronners.com.**

Adorable, tiny and handcrafted, these felt acorn ornaments will add charm to your tree, be it simple or ornate. A dusting of mica flakes makes them glisten. $15.00 (set of 6), **stitchcrafts.etsy.com.**

Hand-embroidered and stitched from felt and cotton prints, this exotic, colorful-beaked bird is a unique embellishment. $11.50, **puffinpatchwork.etsy.com.**

Get the classic candy cane look for your tree with these candy cane ornaments. They're perfect for indoor and outdoor use! $6.99 (set of 6), **bronners.com.**

Adorn your tree with these ready-to-hang shatterproof (and child-proof!) peppermint candy ornaments. They look like glass, but they'll never break! $11.99 (set of 6), **bronners.com.**

Dangle these needle-felted, handmade and 100% wool mini gifts from your wreath, tree or chandelier. Add a bit of color to the season! Set of 6 in rainbow colors. $36.00, **fairyfolk.etsy.com.**

Add kitchen fun and wintry cheer by decorating your tree with this fortune cookie ornament. $7.99, **christmastraditions.com.**

Let it snow! This beautiful Lenox snowflake features *Frozen* favorites Anna and Elsa. $19.99, **bedbathandbeyond.com.**

Let it Snow!

Celebrate wintertime with a beautiful snowy wonderland tablescape.

WRITTEN, STYLED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY **PAULA BIGGS**

When the holidays come around, any and every color scheme for decorating is fair game. Icy blues and silver are a favorite and not just because they're festive—with a wintry mix, they are suitable for any audience, no matter what holiday they may celebrate this time of year! To make a pretty winter table setting for the holidays even more attractive, this decorating inspiration is easy to do inexpensively with easy-to-find items. In fact, you could recreate this entire table yourself for less than $50!

SNOWMAN CENTERPIECE

There are two options to make our darling snowman focal point. You can stack and pin together a few Styrofoam balls, or, as an even less expensive and easier-to-do option, the craft stores are offering pre-stacked, pre-glittered snowman forms this holiday season. You just have to decorate them yourself. Cost? About $6 each—well worth the wow factor on this one. A few spare buttons, felt and pipe cleaners from the kids' craft stash and some ribbon completed our snowman's outfit. He was placed on a cake stand with paper shred "snow," but an upside-down glass and a plate are a great alternative to giving your snow buddy some height on the table.

See Shopping Guide, page 96.

SNOWFLAKES UNDER GLASS

Don't have a couple of cloches hanging around? Use an empty glass jar and fill it with ornaments and cotton balls.

SNOWDRIFTS

There are many varieties of fake snow available in the stores, but most of them are really messy and the clean-up, a headache. Everyday household cotton balls are a great substitute for snow. They're white and fluffy, can be removed in large pieces, easy to locate and, best of all, inexpensive!

WINTER TABLE SETTINGS

Craft stores have a prolific number of glittered foam snowflakes during the holidays. For a dollar or two, you can purchase a multi-pack of pre-cut flakes and use them to accent your decorating. These place settings started with a piece of plain colored card-stock to which we added a white plate, accordion-folded white paper napkin and a foam snowflake. Add washable silverware for a little more glitter on the table.

SNOWMAN GLASSES

Virtually any clear glass can get a bit of snowman treatment to dress up your table. You'll just need a few glue dots, ribbon and black felt. Tie a piece of ribbon around the top of your glass, using glue dots to keep it at the top. Cut a few circles to serve as buttons and use glue dots to stick them to the glass.

SNOWY CHAIR TIEBACKS

Rolls of silver mesh are widely available as Christmas décor—instead of wrapping the tree, wrap your chairs! A big bow in the back is all you need. Add a purchased foam snowflake for the perfect accent.

GLITTERED ORNAMENT PLACE CARDS

Place cards are a great way to add a little personality to your table! Using clear bulbs to start, rub the outside with a thin layer of white glue. Sprinkle fine aqua glitter over the bulbs and allow them to dry. Cut a ½- by 8-inch strip of paper and roll either end toward the center, leaving enough unrolled space to write a name. Glue to the bulb and add a bow. These also work great as party favors: Guests can take their place cards and hang them on the tree at home.

SNOW BACKDROP

To separate rooms or just decorate a wall, make a little bit of "snowfall." Using a wide-eyed needle and a bag of cotton balls, make strings of "snowflakes" and hang them en masse from the ceiling. Children love the whimsical snow effect!

That's a Wrap!

Make homemade gift wrap with your kids this season.

Most kids love unwrapping presents more than they do wrapping them. Usually, the task of wrapping gifts for your family and their friends, teachers, daycare counselors and more falls to you. To bring interest back into getting those presents wrapped, have a gift-wrap-making day, full of papers, paints, crayons and a bunch of beautifully wrapped gifts at the end!

Holiday Ornament Gift Tags

DIRECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **AIMEE ERROR, THEELEPHANTOFSURPRISEBLOG.COM**

Plastic food lids, such as from Pringles, oat meal, nuts, baby formula, etc.
Scissors
Scrapbook or wrapping paper
Hole puncher
Pen
Ribbon, tulle or fabric, for tying

1 Trace the lid onto your paper.
2 Cut the paper slightly inside the line of the circle.
3 If the lid is clear, you can write a message on the paper so it will show through.
4 Place the paper facing up inside the lid and hole punch both paper and lid at one of the edges.
5 String with ribbon, tulle or whatever you want to tie around your gift.

Watercolor Wrapping Paper

DIRECTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MELISSA BAHEN, LULUTHEBAKER.COM**

White crayon
White craft paper
Watercolors
Paint brush
Water

1 Using the white crayon, draw designs, write messages or otherwise decorate the paper. (If you look at it from the right angle, you can see what you're doing.)
2 Paint over the white crayon with watercolors. The paper might wrinkle significantly as it gets wet, but it will actually flatten out as it dries, so don't stress too much.
3 Allow the paper to dry completely before using it to wrap all sorts of gifts.

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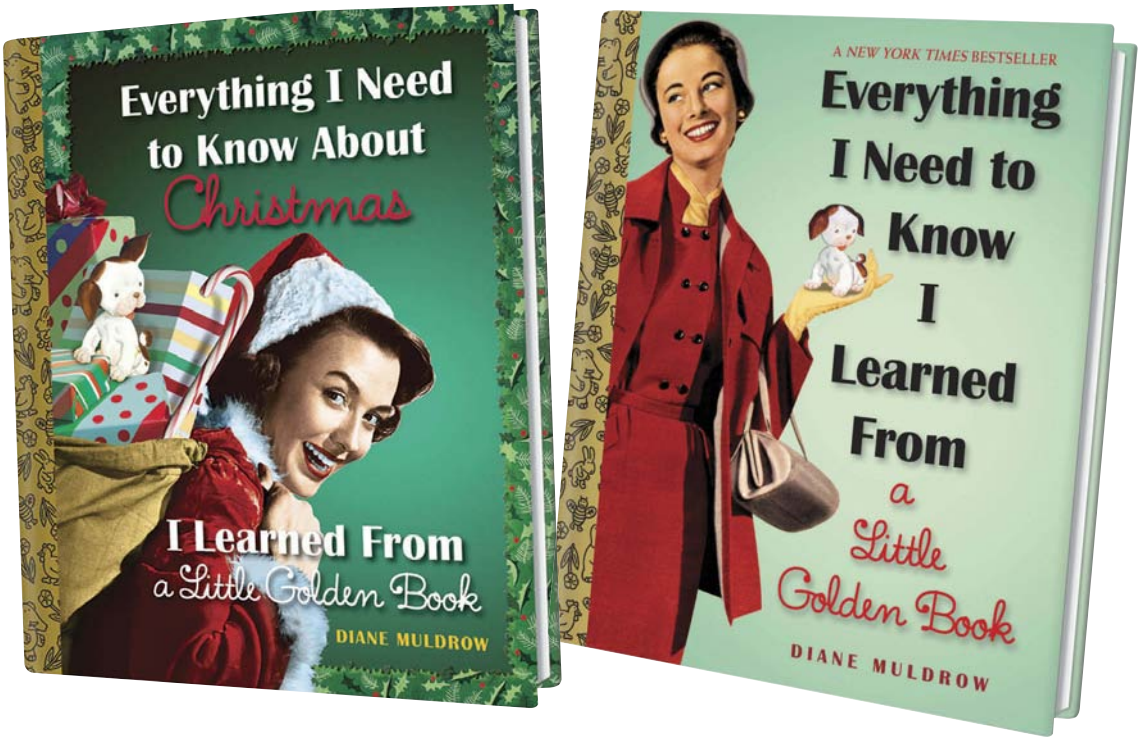


"The colorful pages offer simple advice that is also very true."

—The Huffington Post

From *Christmas Carols*, illustrated by Corinne Malvern, 1946.

LittleGoldenBooks.com

Runaway Gingerbread!

Bake, bake as fast as you can—this mom's cupcake recipe is a hot commodity every year.

BY **TIFFANY RIEDER,** MORIN-HEIGHTS, QUEBEC, CANADA

I first made these cupcakes for a daycare fundraiser a few years ago, and they sold out. People had expected me to make them again for the Christmas bazaar a week later and were coming specifically to buy them. I had no idea that they were that popular and, due to my busy schedule, hadn't prepared more! People were disappointed that year, so I have made them ever since. It's always nice when an original recipe becomes a hit!

Gingerbread Cupcakes

Prep: 10 minutes
Bake: 15-20 minutes
Cool: 30 minutes
Makes 12 cupcakes

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup dark brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup molasses
- ½ cup plain yogurt

FOR THE SPICED FROSTING

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 3 tablespoons whipping cream
- 6 cups confectioners' sugar

1 **FOR THE CUPCAKES:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners; set aside.

2 Whisk together the flour, ground ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, cloves and salt.

3 In the bowl of a stand mixer or with an electric mixer, cream the butter. Add the dry ingredients to the creamed butter and beat on low to blend. Then, add the fresh ginger, sugars, egg, molasses and yogurt, and beat until smooth.

4 Divide batter equally among the muffin tin cups and bake until the center of a cupcake springs back when touched, about 15-20 minutes. Let cool completely before icing.

5 **FOR THE SPICED FROSTING:** In the bowl of a stand mixer or with an electric mixer, cream the butter until smooth. Then, add cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves, and beat to combine.

6 Add the cream and the confectioners' sugar ½ cup at a time (to avoid a mess). Beat until smooth.

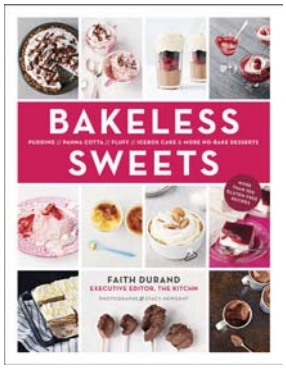
7 Pipe the frosting over gingerbread cupcakes and decorate with colored sprinkles, gum drops, cinnamon hearts or a little dash of ground cinnamon.

Send us a recipe and a photo of your child with the finished dish and it could be featured in the next issue!

Send submissions to:
Reader Recipe Request
Beckett Media
Yum Food & Fun for Kids
22840 Savi Ranch Pkwy., #200
Yorba Linda, CA 92887

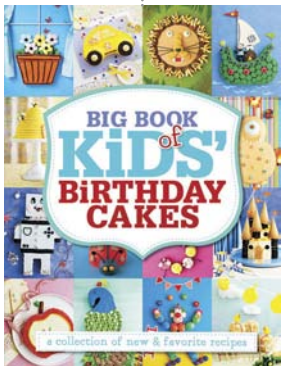
Or email your recipe, along with a photo, to editorial@yumfoodandfun.com.

The Best Books for Young Cooks



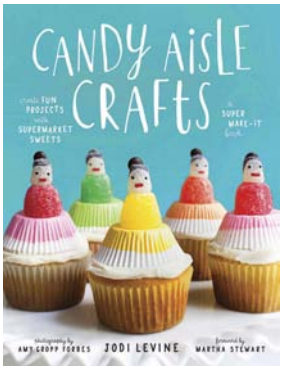
BAKELESS SWEETS by Faith Durand, published by Stewart, Tabori & Chang, ©2013; $29.95, abramsbooks.com.

- **No-Bake Triple Chocolate Brownies (59)**
- **Spicy Peanut and Toasted Coconut Cookies (63)**



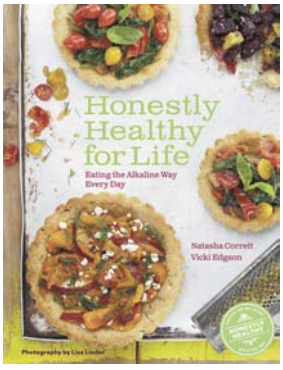
BIG BOOK OF KIDS' BIRTHDAY CAKES by Pamela Clark, published by Sterling Publishing, ©2014; $24.95, sterlingpub.com.

- **Snow People (98)**



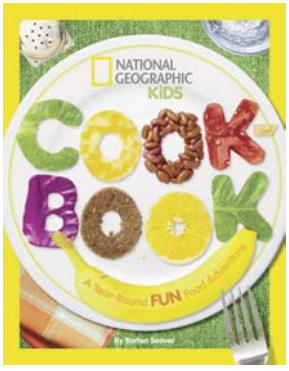
CANDY AISLE CRAFTS by Jodi Levine, published by Potter Craft, ©2014; $16.99, crownpublishing.com.

- **Marshmallow Snowman (60)**
- **Triangle Tree Pops (59)**



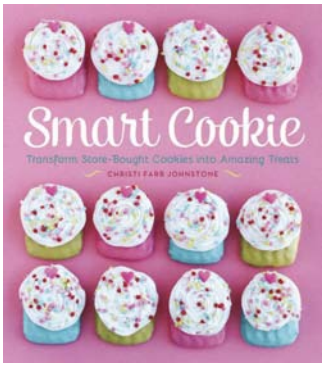
HONESTLY HEALTHY FOR LIFE by Natasha Corrett and Vicki Edgson, published by Sterling Publishing, ©2014; $29.95, sterlingpub.com.

- **Fruity Roll-Ups (11)**
- **Raisin Oat Cookies (11)**



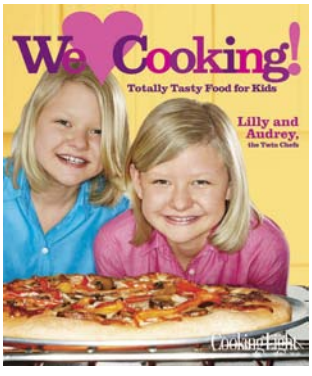
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS COOKBOOK: A YEAR-ROUND FUN FOOD ADVENTURE by Barton Seaver, published by National Geographic Children's Books, ©2014; $19.99, ngchildrensbooks.org.

- **Cranberry-Pear Sauce (51)**
- **Hot Cinnamon Apple Cider (50)**
- **Mashed Sweet Potatoes (50)**
- **New England Pot Roast (48)**



SMART COOKIE by Christi Johnstone, published by Running Press, ©2014; $10.00, runningpress.com.

- **A Slice of Pie (14)**
- **Light the Menorah (15)**
- **Sweet Snowmen (16)**



WE HEART COOKING by Audrey and Lilly Andrews, published by Oxmoor House, ©2014; $21.95, oxmoorhouse.com.

- **Red Velvet Pancakes (37)**
- **Thanksgiving Wrap (34)**

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Festive for All

Page 38

Crafting materials and fabric napkins: Hobby Lobby, hobbylobby.com.
Popcorn kernels: Albertsons, albertsons.com.
Dishes: Fiesta, homerlaughlin.com.

Parade to Victory!

Page 42

Bingo Card: Spoonful, spoonful.com/family-fun/printable-thanksgiving-tv-bingo.

Up North and at 'Em

Page 52

Party supplies (red placemats, penguin toy, penguin notepad, candy cane pencil and penguin lollipop): Oriental Trading, orientaltrading.com.
Printables: Bird's Party, birdsparty.com.

Spruced Up with Sugar and Spice

Page 70

Printables: Sara De St. Jean, homespunhostess.com.
Aprons: Amazon, amazon.com.

Breakfast with Mrs. Claus

Page 74

Fondant pancake topper (for milk bottles): Roni's Sugar Creations, ronisugarcreations.com.
Mrs. Claus sandwich cookies: Alfajores. Cake. Craft., facebook.com/AlfajoresCakecraft.
Printables: Twinkle Twinkle Little Party, twinkletwinklelittleparty.com.

Let It Snow!

Page 84

Pre-made snowman form, glitter foam snowflakes, clear ornament bulbs and craft supplies: Michael's, michaels.com.

PHOTOS BY (CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP): SARA DE ST. JEAN, HOMESPUNHOSTESS.COM; JENNA MORRIS, CANDID HOUR PHOTOGRAPHY; ANDRESSA HARA, TWINKLETWINKLELITTLEPARTY.COM

Happy Holidays!

Santa's Little Helpers

We have a crew of worker elves testing all of our recipes so that your holidays are happier than ever!

Seeing is believing—our Family Advisory Board (a.k.a. Recipe Testers) make sure *Yum* is filled with the tastiest and best recipes every time. From the perfectly crumbly cookie that is delightfully naughty to the steamy crock pot stew that is nutritious and nice, we want to make sure that your family is happy and healthy throughout the winter season. We're always looking for new recipes or tips, so if you've got a holiday secret, send us a line!

Shanna, Addie, Piper and Hayden

myfavoriteeverything.com

Matthew and Zoe

Sandra Woodruff, MS, RD

eatsmarttoday.com

Ace

Ashley

Jessica Corwin, RD

twitter.com/JesicaLeaRD

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No Day Like Snow Day

Capture the fun of being snowed out of school with these cheery snow people cakes.

FROM *THE BIG BOOK OF KIDS' BIRTHDAY CAKES* BY **PAMELA CLARK**

There's only one thing better than a snow day: building a snowman. And how great would it be to build a snowman on any other day, too? This winter, whether it's a snow day or just a regular one, round up the family for a sweet snowman-building session courtesy of your oven and pantry!

Snow People

Prep: 20-25 minutes
Bake: 45 minutes
Cool: 5 minutes
Makes 3 snow people

FOR THE CAKE

- ½ (15-ounce) packet butter cake mix
- 3 cups white frosting, homemade or store bought
- 3 giant white marshmallows

FOR THE DECORATIONS

- ½ ounce white fondant
- Pure confectioners' sugar, for dusting
- Orange food coloring
- 1 red licorice strap
- 1 black licorice strap
- 3 pink mini M&M's
- 3-ounce packet Mallow Bakes, halved
- 6 small cleaned sticks or twigs
- 1 pink cocktail umbrella
- 1 black licorice rope

Tip

To decorate your snow people, you could use pipe cleaners for the arms instead of twigs and cotton wool to create a snowy effect. When "dressing" the snow people, use your imagination and choose whatever "clothes" you like.

1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease 3 cups of a ¾-cup Texas muffin pan. Also, grease 3 cups of a standard muffin pan.

2 **FOR THE CAKE**: Make cake according to directions on packet. Drop 1/3 cup of the mixture into greased Texas pan cups; bake for about 25 minutes. Drop 2½ level tablespoons of the mixture into the greased standard pan cups; bake about 20 minutes. Let cakes stand in the pans 5 minutes before turning, top-side up, onto a wire rack to cool.

3 Level the cake tops. Then, use a small, sharp, finely serrated knife to trim the cakes into rounded shapes. Turn the larger cakes upside down. Place the smaller cakes, top-side up, on top of the larger cakes; secure with a little frosting. Spread frosting all over the cakes and place marshmallows on top of the small cakes for heads. Secure cakes on a cake board with a little frosting.

4 **FOR THE DECORATIONS**: Knead the fondant on a surface dusted with a little sifted confectioners' sugar until the fondant loses its stickiness. With food coloring, tint the fondant orange. Mold into 3 carrot shapes for noses.

5 Using the picture as a guide, make a snowgirl. Cut a bow from the red licorice strap and eyes from the black licorice strap. Secure the bow, eyes and nose to the head with a little frosting. Use pink M&M's for buttons. Position Mallow Bakes around the bottom of the snowgirl for a skirt. Position twigs for arms and add the umbrella.

6 Once again using the picture as a guide, make 2 snowmen. Cut buttons, a bowtie and a scarf from black licorice straps and position them on the snowmen bodies. Cut eyes from a black licorice strap. Secure the eyes and noses with a little frosting. Position twigs for arms. Make hat bases by cutting two ¾-inch rounds from the licorice strap; secure to the heads with a little frosting. Make hat tops by cutting two ½-inch pieces from the licorice rope; secure to the hat bases with a little frosting.

For more on *The Big Book of Kids' Birthday Cakes*, see The Bookshelf, page 95.

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